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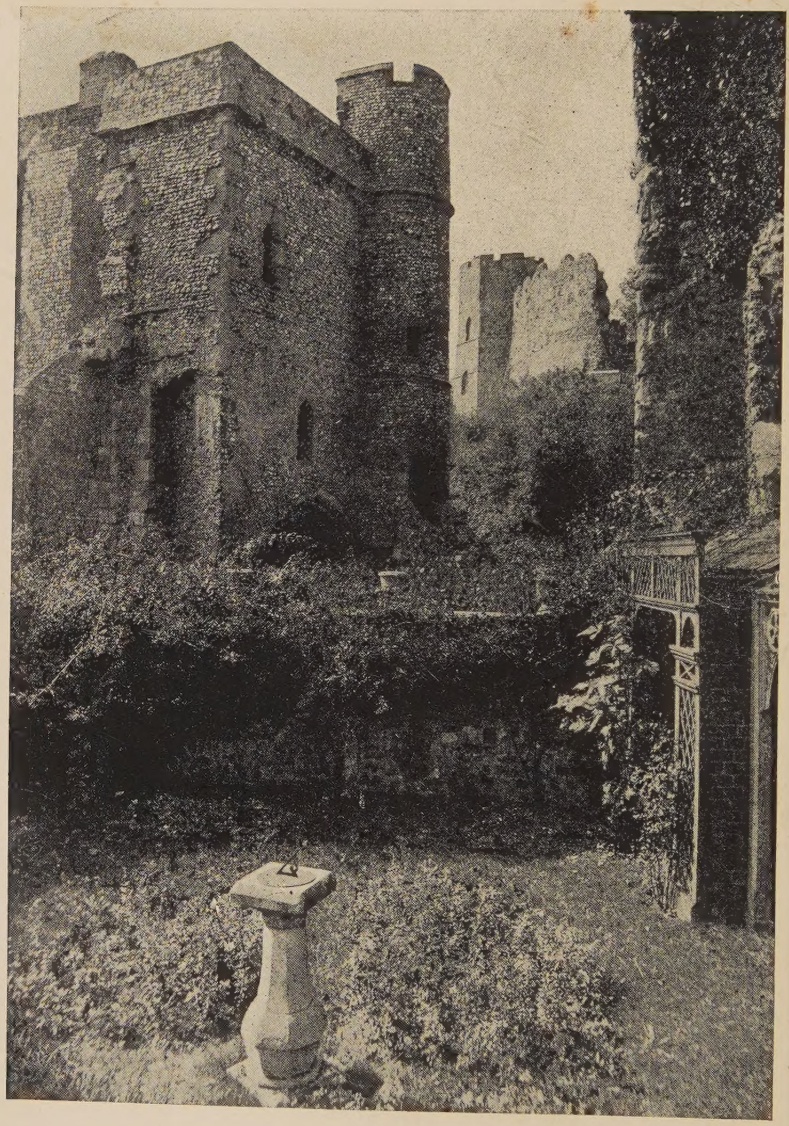

[Frontispiece]

THE CASTLE GATEWAY AND KEEP

A GARDEN OF PEACE

A MEDLEY IN QUIETUDE

259

BY

F. FRANKFORT MOORE

AUTHOR OF
"THE JESSAMY BRIDE," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

DOROTHY

ROSAMUND FRANCIE

OLIVE MARJORIE

URSULA

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A GARDEN OF PEACE

A GARDEN OF PEACE

CHAPTER THE FIRST

Dorothy frowns slightly, but slightingly, at the title; but when challenged to put her frown into words she has nothing worse to say about it than that it has a certain catchpenny click—the world is talking about The Peace and she has an impression that to introduce the word even without the very definite article is an attempt to derive profit from a topic of the hour—something like backing a horse with a trusty friend for a race which you have secret information it has won five minutes earlier—a method of amassing wealth resorted to every day, I am told by some one who has tried it more than once, but always just five minutes too late.

I don't like Dorothy's rooted objection to my literary schemes, because I know it to be so confoundedly well rooted; so I argue with her, assuring her that literary men of the highest rank have never shown any marked reluctance to catch the pennies that are thrown to them by the public when they hit upon a

title that jingles with the jingle of the hour. To descend to an abject pleasantry I tell her that a taking title is not always the same as a take-in title; but, for my part, even if it were——

And then I recall how the late R. D. Blackmore (whose works, by the way, I saw in a bookseller's at Twickenham with a notice over them—"by a local author") accounted for the popularity of *Lorna Doone:* people bought it believing that it had something to do with the extremely popular engagement —"a Real German Defeat," Tenniel called it in his *Punch* cartoon—of the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise. And yet so far from feeling any remorse at arriving at the Temple of Fame by the tradesman's entrance, he tried to get upon the same track again a little later, calling his new novel *Alice Lorraine:* people were talking a lot about Alsace-Lorraine at the time, as they have been doing ever since, though never quite so loudly as at the present moment (I trust that the publishers of the novel are hurrying on with that new edition).

But Dorothy's reply comes pat: If Mr. Blackmore did that, all she can say is that she doesn't think any the better of him for it; just what the Sabbatarian Scotswoman said when the act of Christ in plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath Day was brought under her ken.

"My dear," I cry, "you shouldn't say that about Mr. Blackmore: you seem to forget that his second name was Doddridge, and I think he was fully justified in refusing to change the attractive name of his

heroine of the South Downs because it happened to catch the ears (and the pence) of people interested in the French provinces which were pinched by the Germans, who added insult to injury by transforming Alsace-Lorraine to Elsass-Lothringen. And so far as my own conscience is concerned——"

"Your own what?" cried Dorothy.

"My own conscience—*literary* conscience, of course."

"Oh, that one? Well?"

"I say, that so far as—as—as I am concerned, I would not have shrunk from calling a book *A Garden in Tipperary* if I had written it a few years ago when all England and a third of France were ringing with the name Tipperary.

"Only then it would have been a Garden of War, but now it suits you—your fancy, to make it a Garden of Peace."

"It's not too late yet; if you go on like this, I think I could manage to introduce a note of warfare into it and to make people see the appropriateness of it as well; so don't provoke me."

"I will not," said Dorothy, with one of her perplexing smiles.

And then she became interesting; for she was ready to affirm that every garden is a battlefield, even when it is not run by a husband and his wife—a dual system which led to the most notorious horticultural fiasco on record. War, according to Milton, originated in heaven, but it has been carried on with great energy ever since on earth, and the first garden of

which there is a literary record maintained the heavenly tradition. So does the last, which has brought forth fruit and flowers in abundance through the slaughter of slugs, the crushing of snails, the immolation of leather-jackets, the annihilation of earwigs, and is now to be alluded to as a Garden of Peace, if you please.

Dorothy can be very provoking when she pleases and is wearing the right sort of dress; and when she has done proving that the most ancient tradition of a garden points to a dispute not yet settled, between the man and his wife who were running it, she begins to talk about the awful scenes that have taken place in gardens. We have been together in a number of gardens in various parts of the world: from those of the Borgias, where, in the cool of the evening, Lucrezia and her relations communed on the strides that the science and art of toxicology was making, on to the little Trianon where the diamond necklace sparkled in the moonlight on the eve of the rising of the people against such folk as Queens and Cardinals —on to the gardens of the Temple, where the roses were plucked before the worst of the Civil Wars of England devastated the country—on to Cherry Orchard, near Kingston in the island of Jamaica, where the half-breed Gordon concocted his patriotic treason which would have meant the letting loose of a jungle of savages upon a community of civilisation, and was only stamped out by the firm foot of the white man on whose shoulders the white man's burden was laid, and who snatched his fellow-countrymen

from massacre at the sacrifice of his own career; for party government, which has been the curse of England, was not to be defrauded of its prey because Governor Eyre had saved a colony from annihilation. These are only a few of the gardens in which we have stood together, and Dorothy's memory for their associations is really disconcerting. I am disconcerted; but I wait, for the wisdom of the serpent of the Garden comes to me at times—I wait, and when I have the chance of that edgeways word which sometimes I can't get in, I say,—

"Oh, yes, those were pleasant days in Italy among the cypresses and myrtles, and in Jamaica with its palms. I think we must soon have another ramble together."

"If it weren't for those children—but where should we go?" she cried.

"I'm not sure," I said, as if revolving many memories, "but I think some part of the Pacific Slope——"

"Gracious, why the Pacific Slope, my man?"

"Because a Pacific Garden must surely be a Garden of Peace; and that's where we are going now with the title-page of a book that is to catch the pennies of the public, and resemble as nearly as I can make it—consistent with my natural propensity to quarrel with things that do not matter in the least—one of the shadiest of the slopes of the Island Valley of Avilion—

> "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly, for it lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows, crown'd with summer sea."

Luckily I recollected the quotation, for if I had not been letter-perfect I should have had a poor chance of a bright future with Dorothy.

As it was, however, she only felt if the big tomato was as ripe as it seemed, and said,—

"'Orchard-lawns.' H'm, I wonder if Tennyson, with all his 'careful-robin' observation of the little things of Nature was aware that you should never let grass grow in an apple orchard."

"I wonder, indeed," I said, with what I considered a graceful acquiescence. "But at the same time I think I should tell you that there are no little things in Nature."

"I suppose there are not," said she. "Anyhow, you will have the biggest tomato in Nature in your salad with the cold lamb. Is that the bell?"

"It is the ghost-tinkle of the bell of the bell-wedder who was the father of the lamb," said I poetically.

"So long as you do not mention the mother of the lamb when you come to the underdone stratum, I shall be satisfied," said she.

. . . . . .

PS.—(1.30)—And I didn't.

. . . . . .

PPS.—(1.35)—But I might have.

. . . . . .

CHAPTER THE SECOND

This town of ours is none other than Yardley Parva. Every one is supposed to know that the name means "The Little Sheltered Garden," and that it was given this name by a mixed commission of Normans and Romans. The Normans, who spoke a sort of French, gave it the first syllable, which is the root of what became *jardin,* and which still survives in the "back-yard" of American literature; meaning not the back-yard of an English home, where broken china and glass and other incidental rubbish are thrown to work their way into the bowels of the earth, but a place of flowers and beans and pumpkins. The surname, Parva, represents the influence of the Romans, who spoke a sort of Latin. Philologists are not whole-hearted about the "ley," but the general impression is that it had a narrow escape from being "leigh," an open meadow; ley, however, is simply "lee," or a sheltered quarter, the opposite to "windward."

Whatever foundation there may be for this philology—whether it is derived from *post hoc* evidence or not—every one who knows the place intimately will admit that if it is not literally exact, it should be made so by the Town Council; for it is a town of sheltered little gardens. It has its High Street: and

this name, a really industrious philologist will tell you, is derived, not from its occupying any elevated position, but from the fact that the people living on either side were accustomed to converse across the street, and any one wishing to chat with an opposite neighbour, tried to attract his attention with the usual hail of "hie there!"; and as there was much cross-questioning and answering, there was a constant chorus of "hie, hie!" so that it was really the gibe of strangers that gave it its name, only some fool of a purist seven or eight hundred years ago acquired the absurd notion that the word was "High" instead of "Hie!" So it was that Minnesingers' Lane drifted into Mincing Lane, I have been told. It had really nothing to do with the Min Sing district of China, where the tea sold in that street of tea-brokers came from. Philology is a wonderful study; and no one who has made any progress in its by-paths should ever be taken aback or forced to look silly.

The houses on each side of the High Street are many of them just as they were four or five hundred years ago. Some of them are shops with bow fronts that were once the windows of parlours in the days when honest householders drank small ale for breakfast and the industrious apprentices took down the shutters from their masters' shops and began their day's work somewhere about five o'clock in midsummer, graduating to seven in midwinter. There are now some noble plate-glass fronts to the shops, but there are no apprentices, and certainly no masters. Scores of old, red-tiled roofs remain, but they are no

more red than the red man of America is red. The roofs and the red man are of the same hue. Sixty years ago, when slate roofs became popular, they found their way to Yardley Parva, and were reckoned a guarantee of a certain social standing. If you saw a slate roof and a cemented brick front you might be sure that there was a gig in the stable at the back. You can now tell what houses had once been tiled by the pitch of the roofs. This was not altered on the introduction of the slates.

But with the innovations of plate-glass shop-fronts and slate roofs there has happily been no change in the gardens at the back of the two rows of the houses of the High Street. Almost every house has still its garden, and they remain gay with what were called in my young days "old-fashioned flowers," through the summer, and the pear-trees that sprawl across the high dividing walls in Laocoön writhings—the quinces that point derisive, gnarled fingers at the old crabs that give way to soundless snarls against the trained branches of the Orange Pippins—the mulberries that are isolated on a patch of grass—all are to-day what they were meant to be when they were planted in the chalk which may have supplied Roman children with marbles when they had civilized themselves beyond the knuckle-bones of their ancestors' games.

I cannot imagine that much about these gardens has changed during the changes of a thousand years, except perhaps their shape. When the Anglo-Saxon epidemic of church-building was running its course,

the three-quarters-of-a-mile of the High Street did not escape. There was a church every hundred yards or so, and some of them were spacious enough to hold a congregation of fifty or sixty; and every church had its church-yard—that is, as we have seen—its garden, equal to the emergencies of a death-rate of perhaps two every five years; but when the churches became dwelling-houses, as several did, the church-yard became the back-yard in the American sense: fruit-trees were planted, and beneath their boughs the burgesses discussed the merits of ale and the passing away of the mead bowl, and shook their heads when some simpleton suggested that the arrow that killed Rufus a few months before was an accidental one. There are those gardens to-day, and the burgesses smoke their pipes over the six-thirty edition of the evening paper that left London at five-fifteen, and listen to stories of Dick, who lost a foot at the ford of the Somme, or of Tom, who got the M.C. after Mons, and went through the four years without a scratch, or of Bob, who had his own opinion about the taking of Jerusalem, outside which two fingers of his left hand are still lying, unless a thieving Arab appropriated them.

There the chat goes on from century to century on the self-same subject—War, war, war. It is certain that men left Yardley Parva for the First Crusade; one of the streets that ran from the Roman road to the Abbey which was founded by a Crusading Norman Earl, retains the name that was given to it to commemorate the capture of Antioch when the news

reached England a year or so after the event; and it is equally certain that Yardley men were at Bosworth Field, and Yardley men at Tournai in 1709 as well as in 1918—at the Nile in 1798 as well as in 1915; and it is equally certain that such of them as came back talked of what they had seen and of what their comrades had done. The tears that the mothers proudly shed when they talked of those who had not come home in 1918 were shed where the mothers of the Crusaders of 1099 had knelt to pray for the repose of the souls of their dear ones whose bones were picked by the jackals of the Lebanon. On the site of one of the churches of the market-place there is now built a hall of moving pictures—Moving Pictures—that is the whole sum of the bustle of the thousand years—Moving Pictures. The same old story. Life has not even got the instinct of the film-maker: it does not take the trouble to change the scenes of the exploits of a thousand—ten thousand—years ago, and those of to-day. Egypt, the Nile, Gaza, Jerusalem, Damascus, Mesopotamia. Moving pictures—walking shadows—walking about for a while but all having the one goal—the Garden of Peace; those gardens that surrounded the churches, where now the apple-trees bloom and fruit and shed their leaves.

These little irregular back-gardens are places of enchantment to me and I think I like those behind the smallest of the shops, which are not more than thirty feet square, rather than those higher up the town, of a full acre or two. These bigger ones do not suggest a history beyond the memory of the gardeners

who trim the hedges and cut the grass with a machine. The small and irregular ones suggest a good deal more than a maiden lady wearing gloves, with a basket on her arm and a pair of snipping shears opening its jaws to bite the head off every bloom that has a touch of brown on its edge. But with me it is not a matter of liking and not liking; it is a matter of liking and liking better—it is the artisan's opinion of rival beers (pre-war): all good but some better than others. The little gardens behind the shops are lyrics; the big ones behind the villas are excellent prose, and excellent prose is frequently quite as prosy as excellent verse. They are alive but they are not full of the joy of living. The flowers that they bring forth suggest nice girls whose education is being carefully attended to by gentlemen who are preparing for Ordination. Those flowers do not sing, and I know perfectly well that if they were made to sing it would be to the accompaniment of a harmonium, and they would always sing in tune and in time: but they would need a conductor, they would never try anything on their own—not even when it was dark and no one would know anything about it. Somehow these borders make me think of the children of Blundell's Charity—a local Fund which provides for the education on religious principles of fifteen children born in wedlock of respectable parents. They occupy a special bench in the aisle of one of the churches, and wear a distinctive dress with white collars and cuffs. They attend to the variations of the Sacred Service, and are always as tidy and uninteresting as the

borders in the wide gardens behind the houses that are a quarter of a mile beyond the gardens of the High Street shops.

But it is in these wide gardens that the earliest strawberries are grown, and to them the reporter of the local newspaper goes in search of the gigantic gooseberry or the potato weighing four pounds and three ounces; and that is what the good ladies with the abhorred shears and the baskets—the Atropussies, in whose hands lie the fates of the fruits as well as of the flowers—consider the sum of high gardening: the growth of the abnormal is their aim and they are as proud of their achievement as the townsman who took to poultry was of his when he exhibited a bantam weighing six pounds.

Now I hold that gardens are like nurseries—nurseries of children, I mean—and that all make an appeal to one's better nature, that none can be visited without a sense of pleasure even though it may be no more than is due to the anticipation of getting away from them; therefore, I would not say a word against the types which I venture to describe as I have found them. The worst that I can say of them is that they are easily described, and the garden or the girl that can be described will never be near my heart. Those gardens are not the sort that I should think of marrying, though I can live on the friendliest of terms with them, particularly in the strawberry season. They do not appeal to the imagination as do the small and irregular ones at the rear of the grocer's, the stationer's, the fishmonger's, the bootmaker's, or the

chymist's—in this connection I must spell the name of the shop with a y: the man who sits in such a garden is a chymist, not a chemist. I could not imagine a mere chemist sniffing the rosemary and the tansy and the rue *au naturel:* the mere chemist puts his hand into a drawer and weighs you out an ounce of the desiccated herbs.

In one of Mr. Thomas Hardy's earlier novels—I think it is *The Mayor of Casterbridge*—he describes a town, which is very nearly as delightfully drowsy as our Yardley Parva, as one through which the bees pass in summer from the gardens at one side to those at the other. In our town I feel sure that the bees that enter among the small gardens of sweet scents and savours at one end of the High Street, never reach the gardens of the gigantic gooseberry at the other; unless they make a bee-line for them at the moment of entering; for they must find their time fully occupied among the snapdragons of the old walls, the flowers of the veronica bushes, and the buttons of the tall hollyhocks growing where they please.

When I made, some years ago, a tour of Wessex, I went to Casterbridge on a July day, and the first person I met in the street was an immense bee, and I watched him hum away into the distance just as Mr. Hardy had described him. He seemed to be boasting that he was Mr. Hardy's bee, just as a Presbyterian Minister, who had paid a visit to the Holy Land to verify his quotations, boasted of the reference made to himself in another Book.

" My dear friends," said he, " I read in the Sacred

THE "CREEPER-CLAD RESIDENCE"

Book the prophecy that the land should be in heaps; I looked up from the page, and there, before my very eyes, lay the heaps. I read that the bittern should cry there; I looked up, and lo! close at hand stood the bittern. I read that the Minister of the Lord should mourn there: *I was that Minister.*"

But there are two or three gardens—now that I come to think of it there are not so many as three—governed by the houses of the "better-class people" (so they were described to me when I first came to Yardley Parva), which are everything that a garden should be. Their trees have not been cut down as they used to be forty years ago, to allow the flowers to have undisputed possession. In each there are groups of sycamore, elm, and silver birch, and their position makes one feel that one is on the border of a woodland through which one might wander for hours. There are tulip-trees, and a fine arbutus on an irregular, slightly-sloping lawn, and a couple of enormous drooping ashes—twenty people can sit in the green shade of either. In graceful groups there are laburnums and lilacs. Farther down the slope is a well-conceived arrangement of flower-beds cut out of the grass. Nearly everything in the second of these gardens is herbaceous; but its roses are invariably superb, and its lawn with a small lily pond beside it, is ideal. The specimen shrubs on a lower lawn are perfect as regards both form and flower, and while one is aware of the repose that is due to a thoughtful scheme of colour, one is conscious only of the effect, never being compelled to make use of the word artis-

tic. As soon as people begin to talk of a garden being artistic you know that it has failed in its purpose, just as a portrait-painter has failed if you are impressed with the artistic side of what he has done. The garden is not to illustrate the gardener's art any more than the portrait is to make manifest the painter's. The garden should be full of art, but so artfully introduced that you do not know that it is there. I have heard a man say as if he had just made a unique discovery,—

"How extraordinary it is that the arrangements of colour in Nature are always harmonious!"

Extraordinary!

Equally extraordinary it is that

> "Treason doth never prosper; what's the reason?
> For if it prospers none dare call it treason."

All our impressions of harmony in colour are derived from Nature's arrangements of colour, and when there is no longer harmony there is no longer Nature. Is it marvellous that Nature should be harmonious when all our ideas of harmony are acquired from Nature? A book might be written on this text —I am not sure that several books have not been written on it. It is the foundation of the analysis of what may be called without cant, "artistic impression." It is because it is so trite that I touch upon it in my survey of a Garden of Peace. We love the green of the woodland because it still conveys to us the picture of our happy home of some hundreds of thousands of years ago. We find beauty in an oval

outline because our ancestors of the woodland spent some happy hours bird-nesting. Hogarth's line of beauty is beautiful because it is the line of human life —the line that Nature has ever before her eyes—the line of human love. The colours of countless fruits are a delight to us because we have associated those colours for tens of thousands of years with the delight of eating those fruits, and taking pleasure in the tints of the fruits; we take pleasure in the tints of flowers because they suggest the joys of the fruits. The impression of awe and fear that one of Salvator Rosa's "Rocky Landscapes" engenders is due to our very distant ancestors' experience of the frequent earthquakes that caused these mighty rocks to be flung about when the surface of our old mother Earth was not so cool as it is to-day, as well as to the recollection of the very fearsome moments of a much less remote ancestor spent in evading his carnivorous enemies who had their dens among these awful rocks. From a comparatively recent pastoral parent we have inherited our love for the lawn. There were the sheep feeding in quiet on the grass of the oasis in the days when man had made the discovery that he could tame certain animals and keep them to eat at his leisure instead of having to spend hours hunting them down.

But so deep an impression have the thousands of years of hunting made upon the race, that even among the most highly civilised people hunting is the most popular of all employments, and the hunter is a hero while the shepherd is looked on as a poor sort.

Yes, there are harmonies in Nature, though all makers of gardens do not appreciate them; the discordant notes that occasionally assail a lover of Nature in a garden that has been made by a nurseryman are due to the untiring exertions of the hybridiser. It is quite possible to produce "freaks" and "sports" both as regards form and colour—"Prodigious mixtures and confusion strange." I believe that some professional men spend all their time over experiments in this direction, and I have no doubt that some of them, having perpetrated a "novelty," make money out of it. Equally sure I am that the more conscientious, when they hit upon a novelty that they feel to be offensive, destroy the product without exhibiting it. They have not all the hideous unscrupulousness of Dr. Moreau—the nearest approach to a devil trying to copy the Creator who made man in His own image. Dr. Moreau made things after his own likeness. He was a great hybridiser. (Mr. H. G. Wells, after painting that Devil for us, has recently been showing his skill in depicting the God.)

Now, every one knows that the garden of to-day owes most of its glory to the judicious hybridiser, but I implore of him to be merciful as he is strong. I have seen some heartrending results of his experiments which have not been suppressed, as they should have been. I am told that a great deal in the way of developing the natural colours of a certain group of flowers can be done by the introduction of chemicals into their drinking water. It is like poisoning a well! By such means I believe an unscrupulous gardener

could turn a whole border into something resembling a gigantic advertisement card of aniline dyes.

But I must be careful in my condemnations of such possibilities. There is a young woman named Rosamund, who is Dorothy's first-born, and she is ready at all seasonable times to give me the benefit of her fourteen years' experiences of the world and its ways, and she has her own views of Nature as the mother of the Arts. After listening to my old-fashioned railings against such chromatic innovations as I have abused, she maintained a thoughtful silence that suggested an absence of conviction.

"Don't you see the awfulness of re-dying a flower —the unnaturalness of such an operation?" I cried.

"Why, you old thing, can't you see that if it's done by aniline dyes it's all right—true to Nature and all that?"

"Good heavens! that a child of mine—Dorothy, did you hear her? How can you sit there and smile as if nothing had happened? Have you brought her up as an atheist or what?"

"Every one who doesn't agree with all you say isn't a confirmed atheist," replied Dorothy calmly. "As for Rosamund, what I'm afraid of is that, so far from being an atheist, she is rather too much in the other direction—like 'Lo, the poor Indian.' She'll explain what's in her mind if you give her a chance. What do you mean, my dear, by laying the emphasis on aniline dyes? Don't you know that most of them are awful?"

"Of course I do, darling," said Rosamund. "But

I've been reading about them, and so—well, you see, they come from coal tar, and coal is a bit of a tree that grew up and fell down thousands of years ago, and its burning is nothing more than its giving back the sunshine that it—what is the word that the book used?—oh, I remember—the sunshine that it hoarded when it was part of the forest. Now, I think that if it's natural for flowers to be coloured by the sunshine it doesn't matter whether it's the sunshine of to-day or the sunshine of fifty thousand years ago; it comes from the sun all the same, and as aniline dyes are the sunshine of long ago it's no harm to have them to colour flowers now."

"Daddy was only complaining of the horrid ones, my dear," said the Mother, without looking at me. "Isn't that what you meant?" she added, and now she looked at me, and though I was suspicious that she was smiling under her skin, I could not detect the slightest symptom of a smile in her voice.

"Of course I meant the hideous ones—magenta and that other sort of purple thing. I usually make my meaning plain," said I, with a modified bluster.

"Oh," remarked Rosamund, in a tone that suggested a polite negation of acquiescence.

There was another little silence before I said,—

"Anyhow, it was those German brutes who developed those aniline things."

"Oh, yes; they could do anything they pleased with *coal* tar," said Dorothy. "But the other sort could do anything he pleased with the Germans—and he did!"

"The other sort?" said I inquiringly.

"Yes, the other sort—the true British product—the *Jack* Tar," said Dorothy; and Rosamund, who has a friend who is a midshipman in the Royal Navy, clapped her hands and laughed.

It is at such moments as this that I feel I am not master in my own house. Time was when I believed that my supremacy was as unassailable as that of the Lord High Admiral; but since those girls have been growing up I have come to realise that I have been as completely abolished as the Lord High Admiral—once absolute, but now obsolete—and that the duties of office are discharged by a commission. The Board of Admiralty is officially the Lords Commissioners for discharging the office of Lord High Admiral.

I hope that this *ménage* will be maintained. The man who tries to impose his opinions upon a household because he is allowed to pay all the expenses, is—anyhow, he is not me.

CHAPTER THE THIRD

I BELIEVE I interrupted myself in the midst of a visit to one of the gardens of the "better-class people" who live in the purely residential end of the High Street. These are the people whose fathers and grandfathers lived in the same houses and took a prominent part in preparing the beacons which were to spread far and wide the news that Bonaparte had succeeded in landing on their coast with that marvellous flotilla of his. And from these very gardens more than two hundred and fifty years earlier the still greater grandfathers had seen the blazing beacons that sent the news flying northward that the Invincible Armada of Spain was plunging and rolling up the Channel, which can be faintly seen by the eye of faith from the tower of the Church of St. Mary sub-Castro, at the highest part of the High Street. The Invincible Armada! If I should ever organise an aggressive enterprise, I certainly would not call it "Invincible." It is a name of ill omen. I cannot for the life of me remember where I read the story of the monarch who was reviewing the troops that he had equipped very splendidly to go against the Romans. When his thousand horsemen went glittering by with polished steel cuirasses and plumed helmets

—they must have been the Household Cavalry of the period—his heart was lifted up in pride, and he called out tauntingly to his Grand Vizier, who was a bit of a cynic,—

"Ha, my friend, don't you think that these will be enough for the Romans?"

"Sure," was the reply. "Oh, yes, they will be enough, avaricious though the Romans undoubtedly are."

This was the first of the Invincible enterprises. The next time I saw the word in history was in association with the Spanish Armada, and to-day, over a door in my house, I have hung the carved ebony ornament that belonged to a bedstead of one of the ships that went ashore at Spanish Point on the Irish coast. Later still, there was a gang of murderers who called themselves "Invincibles," and I saw the lot of them crowded into a police-court dock whence they filed out to their doom. And what about the last of these ruffians that challenged Fate with that arrogant word? What of Hindenburg's Invincible Line that we heard so much about a few months ago? "Invincible!" cried the massacre-monger, and the word was repeated by the arch-liar of the mailed fist in half a dozen speeches. Within a few months the beaten mongrels were whimpering, not like hounds, but like hyenas out of whose teeth their prey is plucked. I dare say that Achilles, who made brag a speciality, talked through his helmet about that operation on the banks of the Styx, and actually believed himself to be invincible because invulnerable; but his

mother, who had given him the bath that turned his head, would not have recognised him when Paris had done with him.

The funny part of the Hindenburg cult—I suppose it should be written "Kult"—was that there was no one to tell the Germans that they were doing the work of necromancy in hammering those nails into his wooden head. Everybody knows that the only really effective way of finishing off an enemy is to make a wooden effigy of him and hammer nails into it (every sensible person knows that as the nails are hammered home the original comes to grief). The feminine equivalent of this robust operation is equally effective, though the necromancers only recommended it for the use of schools. The effigy is made of wax, and you place it before a cheerful fire and stick pins into it. It has the advantage of being handy and economical, for there are few households that cannot produce an old doll of wax which would otherwise be thrown away and wasted.

But the Germans pride themselves on having got rid of their superstition, and when people have got rid of their superstition they have got rid of their sense of humour. If they had not been so hasty in naming their invincible lines after Wagner's operas they would surely have remembered that with the *Siegfried*, the *Parsifal*, and the rest there was bound to be included *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the pet name of the German Cavalry: they were the first to fly when the operatic line was broken; and then—*Götterdämmerung Hellröter!*

And why were the Bolsheviks so foolish as to forget that the Czar was "Nicky" to their paymaster, William, and that that name is the Greek for "Victory"? Having destroyed Nicky, how could they look for anything but disaster?

The connection of these jottings with our gardens may not be apparent to every one who reads them. But though the sense of liberty is so great in our Garden of Peace that I do not hold myself bound down to any of the convenances of composition, and though I cultivate rather than uproot even the most flagrant forms of digression in this garden, yet it so happens that when I begin to write of the most distinguished of the gardens of Yardley Parva, I cannot avoid recalling that lovely Saturday when we were seated among its glorious roses, eating peaches that had just been plucked from the wall. We were a large and chatty company, and among the party that were playing clock golf on a part of a lovely lawn of the purest emerald, there did not seem to be one who had read the menace of the morning papers. Our host was a soldier, and his charming wife was the daughter of a distinguished Admiral. At the other side of the table where the dish of peaches stood there was another naval officer, and while we were swapping stories of the Cape, the butler was pointing us out to a telegraph messenger who had come through the French window. The boy made his way to us, taking the envelope from his belt. He looked from one of us to the other, saying the name of my *vis-a-vis*—"Commander A——?"

"I'm Commander A——" said he, taking the despatch envelope and tearing it open. He gave a whistle, reading his message, and rose.

"No reply," he told the messenger, and then turned to me.

"Great King Jehoshaphat!" he said in a low tone. "There is to be no demobilisation of the Fleet, and all leave is stopped. I'm ordered to report. And you said just now that nothing was going to happen. Good-bye, old chap! I've got to catch the 6.20 for Devonport!"

We had been talking over the morning's news, and I had said that the Emperor was a master of bluff, not business.

"I'm off," he said. "You needn't say anything that I've told you. After all, it may only be a precautionary measure."

He went off; and I never saw him again.

The precautionary measure that saved England from the swoop that Germany hoped to bring off as successfully as Japan did hers at Port Arthur in 1904, was taken not by the First Lord of the Admiralty, but by Prince Louis of Battenberg, who was hounded out of the Service by the clamorous gossip of a few women who could find no other way of proving their power.

And the First Lord of the Admiralty let him go; while he himself returned to his "gambling"—he so designated the most important—the most disastrous—incident of his Administration—"a legitimate gam-

ble." A legitimate gamble that cost his country over fifty thousand lives!

Within a month of the holding of that garden party our host had marched away with his men, and within another month our dear hostess was a widow.

That garden, I think, has a note of distinction about it that is not shared by any other within the circle taken by the walls of the little town, several interesting fragments of which still remain. The house by which it was once surrounded before the desire for "short cuts" caused a road to be made through it, is by far the finest type of a minor Elizabethan mansion to be found in our neighbourhood. It is the sort of house that the house-agents might, with more accuracy than is displayed in many of their advertisements, describe as "a perfect gem." It has been kept in good repair both as regards its stone walls and its roof of stone slabs during the three hundred—or most likely four hundred years of its existence, and it has not suffered from that form of destruction known as restoration. It had some narrow escapes in its time, however. An old builder who had been concerned in some of the repairs shook his head sadly when he assured me that a more pig-headed gentleman than the owner of the house at that time he had never known.

"He would have it done with the old material," he explained sadly. "That's how it comes to be like what it is to-day." And he nodded in the direction of the exquisitely-weathered old Caen blocks with the

great bosses of house-leek covering the coping. "It was no use my telling him that I could run up a nine-inch brick wall with proper coping tiles that would have a new look for years if no creepers were allowed on it, for far less money; he would have the old stone, and those squared flints that you see there."

"Some people are very obstinate, thank God!" said I.

"I could have made as good a job of it as I did of St. Anthony's Church—you know the new aisle in St. Anthony's, sir," said he.

I certainly did know the new aisle in St. Anthony's; but I did not say that I did in the tone of voice in which I write. It is the most notorious example of what enormities could be perpetrated in the devastating fifties and sixties, when a parson and his churchwardens could do anything they pleased to their churches.

In a very different spirit was the Barbican of the old Castle of Yardley repaired under the care of a reverential, but not Reverend, director. Every stone was numbered and put back into its place when the walls were made secure.

The gardens and orchards and lawns behind the walls which were reconstructed by the owner whose obstinacy the builder was lamenting, must extend over three or four acres. Such a space allows for a deep enough fringe of noble trees, giving more than a suggestion of a park-land which had once had several vistas after the most approved eighteenth century type, but which have not been maintained by

some nineteenth century owners who were fearful of being accused of tolerating anything so artificial as design in their gardens. But the " shrubberies " have been allowed to remain pretty much as they were planted, with magnificent masses of pink may and innumerable lilacs. The rose-gardens and the mixed borders are chromatic records of the varying tastes of generations.

What made the strongest appeal to me when I was wandering through the grounds a year or two before that fatal August afternoon was the beauty of the anchusas. I thought that I had never seen finer specimens or a more profuse variety of their blues. One might have been looking down into the indigo of the water under the cliffs of Capri in one place, and into the delicate ultramarine spaces of the early morning among the islands of the Ægean in another.

I congratulated one of the gardeners upon his anchusas, and he smiled in an eminently questionable way.

" Maybe I'm wrong in talking to you about them," I said, looking for an explanation of his smile. " Perhaps it is not you who are responsible for this bit."

" It's not that, sir," he said, still smiling. "I'm ready to take all the responsibility. You see, sir, I was brought up among anchusas: I was one of the gardeners at Dropmore."

I laughed.

" If I want to know anything about growing anchusas I'll know where to come for information," I said.

The great charm about these gardens, as well as those of the Crusaders' planting now enjoyed by the people of the High Street, is that among the mystery of their shady places one would not be surprised or alarmed to come suddenly upon a nymph or a satyr, or even old Pan himself. It does not require one to be

"A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,"

to have such an impression conveyed to one, any more than it is necessary for one to be given over exclusively to a diet of nuts and eggs to enjoy, as I hope we all do, a swing on a bough, or, as we grow old, alas! on one of those patent swings made in Paris, U.S.A., where one gets all the exuberance of the oscillation without the exertion. Good old Pan is not dead yet, however insistently the poet may announce his decease. He will be the last of all the gods to go. We have no particular use for Jove, except as the mildest form of a swear word, nor for Neptune, unless we are designing a fountain or need to borrow an emblem of the Freedom of the Seas—we can even carry on a placid existence though Mercury has fallen so low as to be opposite "rain and stormy" on the barometric scale, but we cannot do without our Pan —the jolly, wicked old fellow whom we were obliged to incorporate in our new theological system under the name of Diabolus. It was he, and not the much-vaunted Terpsichore, who taught the infant world to dance, to gambol, and to riot in the woodland. He is the patron of the forest lovers still, as he was

when he first appeared in the shape of an antelope skipping from rock to rock while our arboreal ancestors applauded from their boughs and were tempted to give over their ridiculous swinging by their hands and tails and emulate him on our common mother Earth.

Is there any one of us to-day, I wonder, who has not felt as Wordsworth did, that the world of men and cities is too much with us, and that the shady arbours hold something that we need and that we cannot find otherwhere? The claims of the mysterious brotherhood assert themselves daily when we return to our haunts of a hundred thousand years ago: we can still enjoy a dance on a woodland clearing, and a plunge into the sparkling lake by which we dwelt for many thousand years before some wretch found that the earth could be built up into caves instead of dug into for domestic shelter.

Let any one glance over the illustrated advertisements in *Country Life* and see how frequently the "old world gardens" are set forth as an irresistible attraction of "a desirable residence." The artful advertisers know that the appeal of the old world is still all-powerful, especially with those who have been born in a city and have lived in a city for years. Around Yardley there has sprung up quite recently a colony of red-brick and, happily, red-roofed villas. Nearly all have been admirably constructed, and with an appreciation of the modern requirements in which comfort and economy are combined. They have all gardens, and no two are alike in every particular;

but all are trim and easily looked after. They produce an abundance of flowers, and they are embowered in flowering shrubs, every one of which seems to me to be a specimen. More cheerful living-places could not be imagined; but it is not in these gardens that you need look for the cloven vestiges of a faun or the down brushed from the butterfly wings of a fairy. Nobody wants them there, and there is no chance of any of these wary folk coming where they are not wanted. If old Pan were to climb over one of these walls and his footprints were discovered in the calceolaria bed, the master of the house would put the matter in the hands of the local police, or write a letter signed "Ratepayer" to the local *Chronicle,* inquiring how long were highly-taxed residents to be subjected to such incursions, and blaming the "authorities" for their laxity.

But there is, I repeat, no chance of the slumbers of any of the ratepayers being disturbed by a blurred vision of Proteus rising from the galvanised cistern, or by the blast of Triton's wreathed horn. They will not be made to feel less forlorn by a glimpse of the former, and they would assuredly mistake the latter for the hooter of Simpson's saw-mill.

"The authorities" look too well after the villas, and the very suggestion of "authorities" would send Proteus and Triton down to the deepest depths they had ever sounded. They only come where they are wanted and waited for. It takes at least four generations of a garden's growth to allow of the twisted boughs of the oak or the chestnut turning into the

horns of a satyr, or of the gnarled roots becoming his dancing shanks.

It was one of the most intelligent of the ratepayers of these bright and well-kept "residences" who took me to task for a very foolish statement he had found in a novel of mine (6d. edition) which he said he had glanced at for a few minutes while he was waiting for a train. I had been thoughtless enough to make one of the personages, an enterprising stockbroker, advocate the promotion of a company for the salvage of the diamonds which he had been told Queen Guinevere flung into the river before the appearance of the barge with the lily maid of Astolat drifting to the landing-place below the terrace.

"But you know they were not real diamonds—only the diamonds of the poet's imagination," he said.

"I do believe you are right," said I, when I saw that he was in earnest. And then the mongoose story came to my mind. "They were not real diamonds," I said. "But then the man wasn't a real company promoter."

CHAPTER THE FOURTH

Two hundred years is not a long time to look back upon in the history of Yardley Parva: but it must have been about two hundred years ago that there were in the High Street some houses of distinction. They belonged to noblemen who had also mansions in the county, but who were too sociable and not sufficiently fond of books to be resigned to such isolation from their order as a mansion residence made compulsory. In the little town they were in touch with society of a sort: they could have their whist or piquet or faro with their own set every afternoon, and compare their thirsts at dinner later in the day.

One of these modest residences of a ducal family faces the street to-day, after suffering many vicissitudes, but with the character of its façade unimpaired. The spacious ground-floor has been turned into shops —it would be more correct to say that the shops had been turned into the ground-floor, for structurally there has been no drastic removal of walls or beams. It has not been subjected to any violent evisceration, only to a minor gastric operation—say for appendicitis. On the upper floors the beautiful proportions of the rooms remain uninjured, and the mantelpieces and the cornices have also been preserved.

The back of this house gives on to a part of the dry moat from which the screen-wall of our Castle rises, for Yardley had once a Castle of its own, and picturesque remnants of the Keep, the great gateway, and the walls remain with us. Forty feet from the bed of the moat on this side the walls rise, and the moat must have been the site of the gardens of the ducal house, curving to right and left for a couple of hundred yards, and his lordship saw his chance for indulging in one of the most transfiguring fads of his day by making two high and broad terraces against the walls, thereby creating an imposing range of those hanging gardens that we hear so much of in old gardening books. The Oriental tradition of hanging gardens may have been brought to Europe with one of those wares of Orientalism that were the result of the later crusades; for assuredly at one time the reported splendours of Babylon, Nineveh, and Eckbatana in this direction were emulated by the great in many places of the West, where the need for the protection of the great Norman castles was beginning to wane, and the high, bare walls springing from the fosses, dry and flooded, looked gaunt and grim just where people wanted a more genial outlook.

Powis Castle is the best example I can think of in this connection. No one who has seen the hanging gardens of these old walls can fail to appreciate how splendidly effective must have been the appearance of the terraces of Yardley when viewed from the moat below. But in the course of time, as the roads improved, making locomotion easier, the ducal mansion

was abandoned in favour of another some miles nearer the coast, and the note of exclusiveness being gone from the shadow of the Castle walls, the terraces ceased to be cultivated; the moat being on a level with the High Street, it became attractive as a site of every-day houses, until in the course of time there sprang up a row, and then a public-house or two, and corporate offices and law-courts that only required a hanging garden at assize times, when smugglers and highwaymen were found guilty of crimes that made such a place desirable—all these backed themselves into the moat until it had to be recognised as a public lane though a *cul-de-sac* as it is to-day. At the foot of the once beautiful terraces outhouses and stables were built as they were needed, with the happiest irregularity, but joined by a flint wall over which the straggling survivors of the trees and fruits of the days gone by hang skeleton branches. One doorway between two of the stables opens upon a fine stairway made of solid blocks of Portland stone, leading into a gap in the screen-wall of the Castle, the terrace being to right and left, and giving access to the grounds beyond, the appreciative possessor of which writes these lines. *Sic transit gloria.* Another stone stairway serves the same purpose at a different place; but all the other ascents are of brick and probably only date back to the eighteenth century. They lead to some elevated but depressing chicken-runs.

I called the attention of our chief local antiquarian to the succession of broad terraces and suggested their decorative origin. He shook his head and assured

me that they were ages older than the ducal residence in the High Street. They belonged to the Norman period and were coeval with the Castle walls. When I told him that I was at a loss to know why the Norman builder should first raise a screen-wall forty feet up from a moat, to make it difficult for an enemy to scale, and then go to an amazing amount of trouble to make it easily accessible to quite a large attacking force by a long range of terraces, he smiled the smile of the local antiquarian—a kindly toleration of the absurdities of the tyro—saying,—

"My dear sir, they would not mind such an attack. They could always repel it by throwing stones down from the top—it's ten feet thick there—yes, heavy stones, and melted lead, and boiling water."

I did not want to throw cold water upon his researches as to the defence of a mediæval stronghold, so I thanked him for his information. He disclaimed all pretensions to exclusive knowledge, and said that he would be happy to tell me anything else that I wanted to learn about such things.

I could not resist expressing my fear to him, as we were parting, that the Water Company would not sanction the domestic supply from the kitchen boiler being used outside the house for defensive purposes; but he stilled my doubts by an assurance that in those days there was no Water Company. This was well enough so far as it went, but when I asked where the Castle folk got their water if there was no Company to supply it, he was slightly staggered, I could see; but, recovering himself, he said there would certainly

have been a Sussex dew-pond within the precincts, and, as every one knew, this was never known to dry up.

I did not say that in this respect they had something in common with local antiquarians; but asked him if it was true that swallows spent the winter in the mud at the bottom of these ponds. He told me gravely that he doubted if this could be; for there was not enough mud in even the largest dew-pond to accommodate all the swallows. So I saw that he was as sound a naturalist as he was an antiquarian.

By the way, I wonder how White of Selborne got that idea about the swallows hibernating in the mud at the bottom of ponds. When so keen a naturalist as White could believe that, one feels tempted to ask what is truth, and if it really is to be found, as the swallows are not, at the bottom of a well. One could understand Dr. Johnson's crediting the swallow theory, and discrediting the story of the great earthquake at Lisbon, for he had his own lines of credence and incredulity, and he was what somebody called " a harbitrary gent "; but for White to have accepted and promulgated such an absurdity is indeed an amazing thing.

But, for that matter, who, until trustworthy evidence was forthcoming a few months ago, ever fancied that English swallows went as far south as the Cape of Good Hope? This is now, however, an established fact; but I doubt if White of Selborne would have accepted it, no matter what evidence was claimed for its accuracy. Several times when aboard

THE PEACOCK ARCH

ship off the Cape I have made pets of swallows that came to us and remained in the chief saloon so long as there was a fly to be found; and once in the month of October, on the island of St. Helena, I watched the sudden appearance of a number of the same birds; but it was never suggested that they had come from England. I think I have seen them at Madeira in the month of January, but I am not quite certain about my dates in regard to this island; but I know that when riding through Baines' Kloof in South Africa, quite early in January, swallows were flying about me in scores.

What a pity it seems that people with a reputation for wisdom were for so long content to think of the swallows only as the messengers of a love poem: the "swallow sister—oh, fleet, sweet swallow," or the "swallow, swallow, flying, flying south"—instead of piling up data respecting the wonder of their ways! The same may be said of the nightingale, and may the Lord have mercy on the souls of those who say it!

Are we to be told to be ready to exchange *Itylus* for a celluloid tab with a date on it? or Keats's *Ode* for a corrected notation of the nightingale's trills? At the same time might not a poet now and again take to heart the final lines—the summing up of the next most beautiful Ode in the language—

"Beauty is Truth, Truth beauty"?

Every fact in Nature seems to me to lead in the direction of poetry, and to increase the wonder of that of which man is but an insignificant part. We

are only beginning to know a little about the part we were designed to play in Nature, but the more we know the more surprised, and, indeed, alarmed, we must be when by a revelation its exact position is made known to us. We have not yet learned to live. We have been fools enough to cultivate the forgetting of how to do things that we were able to do thousands of years ago. The half of our senses have been atrophied. It is many years since we first began to take leave of our senses and we have been at it ever since. It is about time that we started recognising that an acquaintance with the facts of Nature is the beginning of wisdom. We crystallised our ignorance in phrases that have been passed on from father to son, and quoted at every opportunity. We refer to people being "blind as a bat," and to others being—as "bold as a lion," or "harmless as a dove." Did it never strike the inventor of any of these similes that it would be well before scattering them abroad to find out if they were founded on fact? The eyesight of the bat is a miracle. How such a creature can get a living for the whole year during the summer months is amazing. The lion is a cowardly brute that runs away yelling at the sight of a rhinoceros and submits without complaint to the insults of the elephant. A troop of doves will do more harm to a wheat-field in an hour than does a thunderstorm.

And the curious thing is that in those quarters where one would expect to find wisdom respecting such incidents of Nature one finds foolishness. Ten centuries of gamekeepers advertise their ignorance in

documentary evidence nailed to the barn doors; they have been slaughtering their best friends all these years and they continue doing so.

After formulating this indictment I opened my *Country Life,* and found in its pages a confirmation of my evidence by my friend F. C. G., who is proving himself in his maturity as accomplished a Naturalist as, in his adolescence, he was a caricaturist in the *Westminster Gazette.* These are his lines:—

THE GAMEKEEPER'S GIBBET

Two stoats, a weasel, and a jay,
In varied stages of decay,
Are hanging on the gibbet-tree
For all the woodland folk to see,
And tattered rags swing to and fro
Remains of what was once a crow.
What were their crimes that when they died
The Earth was not allowed to hide
Their mangled corpses out of sight,
Instead of dangling in the light?
They didn't sin against the Law
Of "Nature red in tooth and claw,"
But 'gainst the edicts of the keeper
Who plays the part of Death the Reaper,
And doth with deadly gun determine
What creatures shall be classed as vermin.
Whether we gibbets find, or grace,
Depends on accident of place,
For what is vice in Turkestan
May be a virtue in Japan.

F. C. G.

And what about gardeners? Why, quite recently I was solemnly assured by one of the profession that I should " kill without mercy "—those were his words —every frog or toad I found in a greenhouse!

But for that matter, don't we remember the harsh decrees of our pastors and masters when as children we yielded to an instinct that had not yet been atrophied, and slaughtered all the flies that approached us. I remember that, after a perceptor's reasoning with me through the medium of a superannuated razor-strop, I was told that to kill a bluebottle was a sin. Now science has come to the rescue of the new generation from the consequences of the ignorance of the old, and the boy who kills most flies in the course of a season is handsomely rewarded. What is pronounced a sin in one generation is looked on as a virtue in the next.

I recollect seeing it stated in a *Zoology for the Use of Schools,* compiled by an F.R.S., with long quotations from Milton at the head of every chapter, that the reason why some fishes of the Tropics were so gorgeously coloured was to enable them to be more easily seen by the voracious enemy that was pursuing them. That was why God had endowed the glow-worm with his glow—to give him a better chance of attracting the attention of the nightingale or any other bird that did not go to roost before dark! And God had also given the firefly its spark that it might display its hospitality to the same birds that had been entertained by the glow-worm! My informant had not mastered the alphabet of Nature.

Long after I had tried to see things through Darwin's eyes I was perplexed by watching a cat trying to get the better of a sparrow in the garden. I noticed that every time it had crouched to make its pounce the cat waved its tail. Why on earth it should try to make itself conspicuous in this way when it was flattening itself into the earth that was nearest to it in colour, and writhing towards its prey, seemed to me remarkable. Once, however, I was able to watch the cat approach when I was seated beyond where the sparrow was digging up worms, and the cat had slipped among the lower boughs of an ash covered with trembling leaves.

There among the trembling leaves I saw another trembling leaf—the soothing, swaying end of my cat's tail; but if I had not known that it was there I should not have noticed it apart from the moving leaves. The bird with all its vigilance was deceived, and it was in the cat's jaws in another moment.

And I had been calling that cat—and, incidentally, Darwin—a fool for several years! I do not know what my Zoologist "for the Use of Schools" would have made of the transaction. Would he have said that a cat abhorred the sin of lying, and scorned to take advantage of the bird, but gave that graceful swing to its tail to make the bird aware of its menacing proximity?

I lived for eleven years in a house in Kensington with quite a spacious garden behind it, and was blest for several years by the company of a pair of blackbirds that made their nest among the converging twigs

of a high lilac. No cat could climb that tree in spring, as I perceived when I had watched the frustrated attempts of the splendid blue Persian who was my constant companion. Of course I lived in that garden for hours every day during the months of April, May, June, and July, and we guarded the nest very closely, even going so far as to disturb the balance of Nature by sending the cat away on a visit when the young birds were being fledged. But one month of May arrived, and though I noticed the parent blackbirds occasionally among the trees and shrubs, I never once saw them approaching the old nest, which, as in previous seasons, was smothered out of sight in the foliage about it, for a poplar towered above the lilac, and was well furnished.

I remarked to my man that I was afraid our blackbirds had deserted us this year, and he agreed with me. But one day early in June I saw the cat look wistfully up the lilac.

"He hasn't forgotten the nest that was there," I said. "But I'm sure he'll find out in which of the neighbouring gardens the new one has been built."

But every day he came out and gazed up as if into the depths of the foliage above our heads.

"Ornithology is his hobby," said I, "but he's not so smart as I fancied, or he would be hustling around the other gardens where he should know murder can be done with impunity."

The next day my man brought out a pair of steps, and placing them firmly under the lilac, ascended to the level of where the nest had been in former years.

At once there came the warning chuckle of the blackbirds from the boughs of the poplar.

"Why, bless my soul! There are four young ones in the nest, and they're nearly ready to fly," sang out the investigator from above, and the parents corroborated every word from the poplar.

I was amazed. It seemed impossible that I could have sat writing under that tree day after day for two months, watching for signs that the birds were there, and yet fail to notice them at their work either of hatching or feeding. It was not carelessness or indifference they had eluded; it was vigilance. I had looked daily for their coming, and there was no fine day in which I was not in the garden for four hours, practically immovable, and the nest was not more than ten feet from the ground, yet I had remained in ignorance of all that was going on above my head!

With such an experience I do not think that it becomes me to sneer too definitely at the stupidity of gamekeepers or farmers. It is when I read as I do from week to week in *Country Life* of the laborious tactics of those photographers who have brought us into closer touch with the secret life of birds than all the preceding generations of naturalists succeeded in doing, that I feel more charitably disposed toward the men who mistake friends for foes in the air.

Every year I give prizes to the younger members of our household to induce them to keep their eyes and their ears open to their fellow-creatures who may be seen and heard at times. The hearing of the earliest cuckoo meets with its reward, quite apart

from the gratifying of an æsthetic sense by the quoting of Wordsworth. The sighting of the first swallows is quoted somewhat lower on the chocolate exchange, but the market recovers almost to a point of buoyancy on hearing the nightingale. The cuckoo is an uncertain customer and requires some looking after; but the swallows are marvellously punctual. We have never seen them in our neighbourhood before April the nineteenth. For five years the Twenty-first is recorded as their day. The nightingale does not visit our garden, which is practically in the middle of the town; but half a mile away one is heard almost every year. Upon one happy occasion it was seen as well as heard, which constituted a standard of recognition not entertained before.

I asked for an opinion of the bird from the two girls who had had this stroke of luck.

Each took a different standpoint in regard to its attainments.

"I never heard anything so lovely in all my life," said Rosamund, aged ten. "It made you long to—to—I don't know what. It was lovely."

"And what was your opinion, Olive?" I asked of the second little girl.

My Olive branch looked puzzled for a few minutes, but she had the sense to perceive that comparative criticism is safe, when a departure from the beaten track is contemplated. Her departure was parabolic.

"I didn't think it half as pretty a bird as Miss Midleton's parrot," she said with conviction.

Miss Midleton's parrot is a gorgeous conglomeration of crimson and blue, like the 'at of 'arriet, that should be looked at through smoked glasses and heard not at all.

I think that I shall have Olive educated to take her place in a poultry run; while Rosamund looks after the rose garden.

. . . . . .

My antiquary came to me early on the day after I had asked him for information about the hanging gardens.

"I've been talking to my friend Thompson on the subject of those hanging gardens of the Duke's," said he; "and I thought that you would like to hear what he says. He agrees with me—I fancied he would. The Duke had no power to hang any one in his gardens, Thompson says; and even if he had the power, the pear-trees that we see there now weren't big enough to hang a man on."

"A man—a man! My dear sir, I wasn't thinking of his hanging men there: it was clothes—clothes—linen—pants—shirts—pajamas, and the like."

"Oh, that's quite another matter," said he.

I agreed with him.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH

In a foregoing page I brought those who are ready to submit to my guidance up to the boundary wall of my Garden of Peace by the stone staircases sloping between the terraces of the old hanging gardens of the Castle moat. With apologies for such a furtive approach I hasten to admit them through the entrance that is in keeping with their rank and station. I bow them through the Barbican Entrance, which is of itself a stately tower, albeit on the threshold of modernity, having been built in the reign of Edward II., really not more than six hundred years ago. I feel inclined to apologise for mentioning this structure of yesterday when I bring my friends on a few yards to the real thing—the true Castle gateway, gloriously gaunt and grim, with the grooves for the portcullis and the hinges on which the iron-barbed gate once swung. There is no suggestion in its architecture of that effeminacy of the Perpendicular Period, which may be seen in the projecting parapet of the Barbican, pierced to allow of the molten lead of my antiquary being ladled out over the enemy who has not been baffled by the raising of the drawbridge. Molten lead is well enough in its way, and no doubt, when brought up nice and warm from the kitchen, and al-

lowed to drop through the apertures, it was more or less irritating as it ran off the edge of the helmets below and began to trickle down the backs of an attacking party. The body-armour was never skin-tight, and molten lead has had at all times an annoying way of finding out the joinings in a week-day coat of mail; we know how annoying the drip of a neighbour's umbrella can be when it gets through the defence of one's mackintosh collar and meanders down one's back.—No, not a word should be said against molten lead as a sedative; but even its greatest admirers must allow that as a medium of discouragement to an enemy of ordinary sensitiveness it lacked the robustness of the falling Rock.

The Decorative note of the Perpendicular period may have been in harmony with such trifling as is incidental to molten lead, but the stern and uncompromising Early Norman gate would defend itself only with the Rock. That was its character; and when a few hundredweight of solid unsculptured stone were dropped from its machicolated parapet upon the armed men who were fiddling with the lock of the gate below, the people in the High Street could hardly have heard themselves chatting across that thoroughfare on account of the noise, and tourists must have fancied that there was a boiler or two being repaired by a conscientious staff anxious to break the riveting record.

Everything remains of the Castle gateway except the Gate. The structure is some forty feet high and twelve feet thick. The screen-wall was joined to it

on both sides, and when you pass under the arch and through a more humble doorway in the wall you are at the entrance to my Garden of Peace.

This oaken door has a little history of its own. For several years after I came to Yardley Parva I used to stand opposite to it in one of the many narrow lanes leading to the ramparts of the town. I knew that the building to which it belonged, and where some humble industry was carried on, embodied the ancient church of Ste. Ursula-in-Foro. The stone doorway is illustrated in an old record of the town, and I saw where the stone had been worn away by the Crusaders sharpening the barbs of their arrows on it for luck. I had three carefully thought-out plans for acquiring this door and doorway; but on consideration I came to the conclusion that they were impracticable, unless another Samson were to come among us with all the experience of his Gaza feat.

I had ceased to pass through that ancient lane; it had become too much for me; when suddenly I noticed building operations going on at the place; a Cinema palace was actually being constructed on the consecrated site of the ancient church! Happily the door and the doorway were not treated as material for the housebreaker; they were removed into the cellar of the owner of the property, and from him they were bought by me for a small sum—much less than I should have had to pay for the shaped stones alone. The oak door I set in the wall of my house, and the doorway I brought down my garden where it now features as an arch spanning one of the paths.

But my good fortune did not end here; for a few years later a fine keystone with a sculptured head of Ste. Ursula was dug up in the little garden behind the site of the tiny church, and was presented to me with the most important fragments of two deeply-carved capitals such as one now and again sees at the entrance to a Saxon Church; and so at last these precious relics of mediæval piety are joined together after a disjunctive interval of perhaps five or six hundred years, and, moreover, on a spot not more than a few hundred feet from where they had originally been placed.

Sir Martin Conway told some years ago of his remarkable discovery in the grounds of an English country house, of one of the missing capitals of Theodocius, with its carved acanthus leaves blown by the wind and the monogram of Theodocius himself. A more astounding discovery than this can hardly be imagined. No one connected with it was able to say how it found its way to the place where it caught the eye of a trustworthy antiquarian; and this fact suggested to me the advisability of attaching an engraved label to such treasure trove, giving their history as far as is known to the possessors. The interest attaching to them would be thereby immensely increased, and it would save much useless conjecture on the part of members of Antiquarian Societies. Some people seem to think that paying a subscription to an Antiquarian Society makes one a fully qualified antiquarian, just as some people fancy that being a Royal Academician makes one a good painter.

The great revival in this country in the taste for the Formal Garden and the Dutch Garden has brought about the introduction of an immense number of sculptured pieces of decoration; and one feels that in the course of time our gardens will be as well furnished in this way as those of Italy. The well-heads of various marbles, with all the old ironwork that one sees nowadays in the yards of the importers, are as amazing as the number of exquisite columns for pergolas, garden seats of the most imposing character, vases of bronze as well as stone or marble, and wall fountains. And I have no doubt that the importers would make any purchaser acquainted with the place of origin of most of these. Of course we know pretty well by now where so many of the treasures of the Villa Borghese are to be found; but there are hundreds of other pieces of sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian work that arrive in England, and quite as many that go to the United States, without any historical record attached to them. I do hope that the buyers of these lovely things will see how greatly their value and the interest attaching to them would be increased by such memoranda of their origin.

The best symbol of Peace is a ploughshare that was once a sword; and surely a garden that has been made in the Tiltyard of a Norman Castle may be looked on as an emblem of the same Beatitude. That is how it comes that every one who enters our garden cries,—

"How wonderfully peaceful!"

I have analysed their impression that forces them to say that. The mild bustle of the High Street of a country town somehow imposes itself upon one, for the simple reason that you can hear it and observe it. The bustle of London is something quite different. One is not aware of it. You cannot see the wood for the trees. It is all a wild roar. But when our High Street is at its loudest you can easily distinguish one sound from another.

Then the constant menace of motor-cars rushing through the High Street leaves an impression that does not vanish the moment one turns into the passage of the barbican; and upon it comes the sight of the defensive masonry, which is quite terrific for the moment; then comes the looming threat of the Norman gateway which gives promise of no compromise! It is not necessary that one should have a particularly vivid imagination to hear the clash and clang of armoured men riding forth with lances and battleaxes; and when one steps aside out of their way, the rest is silence and the silence is rest.

"How wonderfully peaceful!" every one cries.

And so it is.

You can hear the humming of a bee—the flick of a swallow's wing, the tinkle of the fountain—a delightful sound like the counting out of the threepenny pieces in the Church Vestry after a Special Collection—and the splash of a blackbird in its own particular bath. These are the sounds that cause the silence to startle you. "Darkness visible," is Milton's phrase. But to make an adaptation of it is not enough to ex-

press what one feels on entering a walled garden from a street even of a country town. There is an outbreak of silence the moment the door is closed, and it is in a hushed tone that one says, when one is able to speak,—

"How wonderfully peaceful!"

I think that a garden is not a garden unless it is walled. Perhaps a high hedge of yew or box conveys the same impression as a built-up wall; but I am not quite certain on this point. The impression has remained with us since the days when an Englishman's home was his castle and an Englishman's castle his home. What every one sought was security, and a consciousness of security only came when one was within walls. In going through a country of wild animals one has a kindred feeling when the fire is lighted at nightfall. Another transmitted instinct is that which forces one to look backward on a road when the sound of steps tells one that one is being followed. The earliest English gardens of which any record remains were walled. In the illustrations to the *Romaunt of the Rose*, we see this; and possibly the maze became a feature of the garden in order to increase the sense of security from the knife of an enemy whose slaughter had been overlooked by the mediæval horticultural enthusiast, who sought for peace and quiet on Prussian principles.

I think it was the appearance of the walls that forced me to buy my estate of a superficial acre. Certainly until I saw them I had no idea of such a purchase. If any one had told me on that morning when

THE CASCADE
MONOLITHS FROM GIANT'S CAUSEWAY IN FOREGROUND

I strolled up the High Street of Yardley Parva while the battery of my car was being re-charged after the manner of those pre-magneto times, that I should take such a step I would have laughed. But it was a day of August sunshine and there was an auction of furniture going on in the house. This fact gave me entrée to the " old-world garden " of the agent's advertisement, and when I saw the range of walls ablaze with many-coloured snapdragons above the double row of hollyhocks in the border at their foot, I " found peace," as the old Revivalists used to phrase the sentiment, only their assurance was of a title to a mansion in the skies, while I was less ambitious. I sought peace and ensued it, purchasing the freehold, and I have been ensuing it ever since.

The mighty walls of the old Castle compass us about as they did the vari us dwellers within their shelter eight hundred years ago. On one side they vary from twelve feet to thirty in height, but on the outer side they rise from the moat and loom from forty to fifty feet above the lowest of the terraces. At one part, where a Saxon earthwork makes a long curved hillock at the farther end of the grounds, the wall is only ten feet above the grassy walk, but forty feet down on the other side. The Norman Conqueror simply built his wall resting against the mound of the original and more elementary fortification. Here the line of the screen breaks off abruptly; but we can see that at one time it was carried on to an artificial hill on the summit of which the curious feature of a second keep was built—the well-preserved main keep

forms an imposing incident of the landscape in the opposite direction.

The small plateau which was once enclosed by the screen-wall is not more than three acres in extent; from its elevation of a couple of hundred feet it overlooks the level country and the shallow river-way for many miles—a tranquil landscape of sylvan beauty dominated by the everlasting Downs. Almost to the very brink of the lofty banks of the plateau on one side we have an irregular bowling-green, bordered by a row of pollard ashes. From a clause in one of my title deeds I find that three hundred years ago the bowling-green was in active existence and played a useful part as a landmark in the delimitation of the frontier. It is brightly green at all seasons; and the kindly neighbouring antiquarian confided in me how its beauty was attained and is maintained.

"Some time ago an American tourist asked the man who was mowing it how it came to be such a fine green, and says the man, 'Why, it's as easy as snuffling: all you've got to do is to lay it down with good turf at first and keep on cutting it for three or four hundred years and the thing is done.' Smart of the fellow, wasn't it?"

"It was very smart," I admitted.

Our neighbour showed his antiquarian research in another story as well as in this one. It related to the curate of a local parish who, in the unavoidable absence of his vicar, who was a Rural Dean, found himself taking a timid breakfast with the Bishop of the

Diocese. He was naturally a shy man and he was shying very highly over an egg that he had taken and that was making a very hearty appeal to him. Observing him, the Bishop, with a thorough knowledge of his Diocese, and being well aware that the electoral contest which had been expected a few months earlier had not taken place, turned to the curate and remarked——

But if you've heard the story before what he remarked will not appeal to you so strongly as the egg did to the clergyman; so there is nothing gained by repeating the remark or the response intoned by the curate.

But when our antiquarian told us both we heartily agreed with him that that curate deserved to be a bishop.

We are awaiting without impatience, I trust, the third of this Troika team of anecdotes—the one that refers to the Scotsman and Irishman who came to the signpost that told all who couldn't read to inquire at the blacksmith's. That story is certain to be revealed to us in time. The antiquarian from the stable of whose memory the other two of the team were let loose cannot possibly restrain the third.

Such things are pleasantly congenial with the scent of lavender in an old-world garden that knows nothing of how busy people are in the new world outside its boundary. But what are we to say when we find in a volume of serious biography published last year only as a previously unheard-of instance of the wit of the "subject," the story of the gentleman who,

standing at the entrance to his club, was taken for the porter by a member coming out?

"Call me a cab," said the latter.

"You're a cab," was the prompt reply.

The story in the biography stops there; but the original one shows the wit making a second score on punning points.

"What do you mean?" cried the other. "I told you to call me a cab."

"And I've called you a cab. You didn't expect me to call you handsome," said the ready respondent.

Now that story was a familiar Strand story forty years ago when H. J. Byron was at the height of his fame, and he was made the hero of the pun (assuming that it is possible for a hero to make a pun).

But, of course, no one can vouch for the mint from which such small coin issues. If a well-known man is in the habit of making puns all the puns of his generation are told in the next with his name attached to them. H. J. Byron was certainly as good a punster as ever wrote a burlesque for the old Gaiety; though a good deal of the effect of his puns was due to their delivery by Edward Terry. But nothing that Byron wrote was so good as Burnand's title to his Burlesque on *Rob Roy,* the play which Mrs Bateman had just revived at Sadler's Wells. Burnand called it *Robbing Roy, or Scotch'd, not Kilt.* The parody on "Roy's Wife," sung by Terry, was exquisite, and very topical,—

"Roy's wife of Alldivalloch!
Roy's wife of Alldivalloch!

Oh, while she
Is wife to me,
Is life worth living, Mr. Mallock?"

Mr. Mallock's book was being widely discussed in those days, and *Punch* had his pun on it with the rest.

"Is Life worth living?" "It depends on the liver."

The Garrick Club stories of Byron, Gilbert, and Burnand were innumerable. To the first-named was attributed the dictum that a play was like a cigar. "If it was a good one all your friends wanted a box; but if it was a bad one no amount of puffing would make it draw."

The budding *littérateurs* of those days—and nights—used to go from hearing stories of Byron's latest, to the Junior Garrick to hear Byron make up fresh ones about old Mrs. Swanborough of the Strand Theatre. Some of them were very funny. Mrs. Swanborough was a clever old lady with whom I was acquainted when I was very young. She never gave utterance to the things Byron tacked on to her. I recollect how amused I was to hear Byron's stories about her told to me by Arthur Swanborough about an old lady who had just retired from the stage, and then, passing on to Orme Square on a Sunday evening, to hear "Johnny Toole," as he was to the very youngest of us, tell the same stories about a dear old girl who was still in his company at the Folly Theatre.

So much for the circulation of everyday anecdotes. Dean Swift absorbed most of the creations of the early

eighteenth century; then Dr. Johnson became the father of as many as would fill a volume. Theodore Hook, Tom Hood, Shirley Brooks, Albert Smith, Mark Lemon, and several others whose names convey little to the present generation, were the reputed parents of the puns which enlivened the great Victorian age. But if a scrupulous historian made up his mind to apply for a paternity order against any one of these gay dogs, that historian would have difficulty in bringing forward sufficient evidence to have it granted.

The late Mr. M. A. Robertson, of the Treaty Department of the Foreign Office, told me that his father—the celebrated preacher known to fame as "Robertson of Brighton"—had described to him the important part played by the pun in the early sixties. At a dinner-party at which the Reverend Mr. Robertson was a guest, a humorist who was present picked up the menu card and set the table on a roar with his punning criticism of every *plat*. Robertson thought that such a spontaneous effort was a very creditable *tour de force*—doubtless the humorist would have called it a *tour de farce*—but a few nights later he was at another party which was attended by the same fellow-guest, and once again the menu, which happened to be exactly the same also, was casually picked up and dealt with *seriatim* as before, with an equally hilarious effect. He mentioned to the hostess as a curious coincidence that he should find her excellent dinner identical with the one of which he had partaken at the other house; and then she con-

fided in him that the great punster had given her the bill of fare that afforded him his opportunity of displaying his enlivening trick! Robertson gave me the name of this Victorian artist, but there is no need for me to reveal it in this place. The story, however, allows us a glimpse into the studio of one of the word-jugglers of other days; and when one has been made aware of the machinery of his mysteries, one ceases to marvel.

Two brothers, Willie and Oscar Wilde, earned many dinners in their time by their conversational abilities; and I happen to know that before going out together they rehearsed very carefully the exchange of their impromptus at the dinner table. Both of these brothers were brilliant conversationalists, and possessed excellent memories. They were equally unscrupulous and unprincipled. The only psychological distinction between the two was that the elder, Willie, possessed an impudence of a quality which was not among Oscar's gifts. Oscar was impudent enough to take his call on the first night of *Lady Windermere's Fan* smoking a cigarette, and to assure the audience that he had enjoyed the play immensely; but he was never equal to his brother in this special line. Willie was a little over twenty and living with his parents in Dublin, where he had a friendly little understanding with a burlesque actress who was the principal boy in the pantomime at the Gaiety Theatre. She wrote to him one day making an appointment with him for the night, and asking him to call for her at the stage door. The girl addressed

the letter to "Wm. Wilde, Esq.," at his home, and as his father's name was William he opened it mechanically and read it. He called Willie into his study after breakfast and put the letter before him, crying, "Read that, sir!"

The son obeyed, folded it up and handed it back, saying quietly,—

"Well, dad, do you intend to go?"

To obtain ready cash and good dinners, Willie Wilde, when on the staff of a great London newspaper, was ready to descend to any scheming and any meanness. But the descriptive column that he wrote of the sittings of the Parnell Commission day after day could not be surpassed for cleverness and insight. He would lounge into the Court at any time he pleased and remain for an hour or so, rarely longer, and he spent the rest of the day amusing himself and flushing himself with brandies and soda at the expense of his friends. He usually began to write his article between eleven and twelve at night.

Such were these meteoric brothers before the centrifugal force due to their revolutionary instinct sent them flying into space.

But one handful of the meteoric dust of the conversation of either was worth all the humour of the great Victorian punsters.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH

From the foregoing half-dozen pages it is becoming pretty clear that a Garden of Peace may also be a Garden of Memories. But I am sure that one of the greatest attractions of garden life to a man who has stepped out of a busy world—its *strepitumque virumque,* is that it *compels* him to look forward, while *permitting* him to look back. The very act of dropping a seed into the soil is prospective. To see things growing is stimulating, whether they are children or other flowers. One has no time to think how one would order one's career, avoiding the mistakes of the past, if one got a renewal of one's lease of life, for in a garden we are ever planning for the future; but these rustling leaves of memory are useful as a sort of mulch for the mind.

And the garden has certainly grown since I first entered it ten years ago. It was originally to be referred to in the singular, but now it must be thought of in the plural. It was a garden, now it is gardens; and whether I have succeeded or not my experience compels me to believe that to aim at the plural makes for success. Two gardens, each of thirty feet square, are infinitely better than one garden of sixty. I am sure of that to-day, but it took me some time to find

it out. A garden to be distinctive must have distinct features, like every other thing of life.

I notice that most writers on garden-making begin by describing what a wilderness their place was when they first took it in hand. I cannot maintain that tradition. Mine had nothing of the wilderness about it. On the contrary, it was just too neat for my taste. The large lawn on to which some of the lower rooms of the house opened, had broad paths on each side and a broad flower border beyond. There was not a shrub on the lawn and only one tree—a majestic deodar spreading itself abroad at an angle of the nearest wing of the house; but on a knoll at the farther end of the lawn there were, we discovered next summer, pink and white mays, a wild cherry, and a couple of laburnums, backed by a towering group made up of sycamores and chestnuts. Such a plan of planting could not be improved upon, I felt certain, though I did not discuss it at the time; for I was not out to make an alteration, and my attention was wholly occupied with the appearance of the ancient walls, glorious with snapdragon up to the lilacs that made a coping of colour for the whole high range, while the lower brick boundary opposite was covered with pears and plums clasping hands in espalier form from end to end.

But I was not sure about the flower borders which contained alternate clumps of pink geraniums and white daisies. Perhaps they were too strongly reminiscent of the window-boxes of the Cromwell Road through which I had walked every day for nearly

twenty years, and in time one grows weary even of the Cromwell Road!

But so well did the accident of one elbow of the wall of the bowling-green pushing itself out lend itself to the construction of the garden, that the first and most important element in garden-design was attained. This, I need hardly say, is illusion and surprise. One fancied that here the limits of the ground had been reached, for a fine deciduous oak seemed to block the way; but with investigation one found oneself at the entrance to a new range of grounds which, though only about three times as large as the first, seemed almost illimitable.

The greater part had at one time been an orchard, we could see; but the trees had been planted too close to one another, and after thirty or forty years of jostling, had ceased to be of any pictorial or commercial value, and I saw that these would have to go. Beyond there was a kitchen garden and a large glass-house, and on one side there was a long curve of grass terrace made out of the Saxon or Roman earthwork, against which, as I have already said, the Norman walls were built, showing only about twelve or fifteen feet above the terrace, while being forty or fifty down to the dry moat outside. This low mural line was a mass of antirrhinums, wallflowers, and such ferns as thrive in rock crevices.

There was abviously not much to improve in all this. We were quite satisfied with everything as it stood. There was nothing whatsoever of the wilderness that we could cause to blossom as the rose, only

—not a rose was to be seen in any part of the garden!

We were conscious of the want, for our Kensington garden had been a mass of roses, and we were ready to join on to Victor Hugo's "*Une maison sans enfants,*" "*un jardin sans roses.*" But we were not troubled; roses are as easily to be obtained as brambles—in fact rather more easily—and we had only to make up our minds where to plant them and they would blush all over the place the next summer.

We had nothing to complain of but much to be thankful for, when, after being in the house for a month, I found the old gardener, whom we had taken over with the place, wheeling his barrow through a doorway which I knew led to a dilapidated potting-shed, and as I saw that the barrow was laden with rubbish I had the curiosity to follow him to see where he should dispose of it.

He went through a small iron gate in the wall alongside the concealed potting-house, and, following him, I found myself to my amazement in a small walled space, forty feet by thirty, containing rubbish, but giving every one with eyes to see such a picture of the Barbican, the Castle Gate with the Keep crowning the mound beyond, as made me shout—such a picture as was not to be found in the county!

If it had a fault at all it was to be found in its perfection. Every one has, I hope, seen the Sham Castle, the castellated gateway, built on Hampton Down, near Bath, to add picturesqueness to the prospect as seen from the other side. This is as perfectly

made a ruin as ever was built up by stage carpenters. There was no reason why it should not be so, for it was easy to put a stone in here and there if an improvement were needed, or to dilapidate a bit of a tower until the whole would meet with the approval even of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who are, I am given to understand, the best informed authorities in England on the assessment of dilapidations. I must confess that the first glimpse I had of the picture that stood before my eyes above my newly-acquired rubbish-heaps suggested the perfection of a sham. The *mise-en-scène* seemed too elaborate—too highly finished—no detail that could add to the effect being absent. But there it was, and I remained looking at it for the rest of the day.

The over-conscientious agents had said not a word in the inventory of the most valuable asset in connection with the property. They had scrupulously advertised the "unique and valuable old-fashioned residence," and the fact that it was partially "covered by creepers"—a partiality to which I was not very partial—and that the "billiard saloon" had the same advantages—they had not failed to allude to the gardens as "old-world and quaint," but not one word had they said about this view from the well-matured rubbish-heaps!

It was at this point that I began to think about improvements, and the first essay in this direction was obvious. I had the rubbish removed, the ground made straight, a stone sundial placed in the centre, and a Dutch pattern of flower-beds cut around it.

On the coping of the walls—they were only six feet high on our side, but forty on the outside—I placed lead and stone vases and a balustrade of wrought iron-work. I made an immense window in the wall of the potting-shed—a single sheet of plate-glass with four small casements of heraldic stained glass; and then the old potting-shed I panelled in coloured marbles, designed a sort of domed roof for it and laid down a floor in mosaics. I had in my mind a room in the Little Trianon in all this; and I meant to treat the view outside as a picture set in one wall. Of course I did not altogether succeed; but I have gone sufficiently far to deceive more than one visitor. Entering the room through a mahogany door set with a round panel of beautifully-clouded onyx—once a table-top in the gay George's pavilion at Brighton—a visitor sees the brass frame of the large window enclosing the picture of the Barbican, the Gateway, and the Keep, and it takes some moments to understand it.

All this sounds dreadfully expensive; but through finding a really intelligent builder and men who were ready to do all that was asked of them, and, above all, through having abundance of material collected wherever it was going at shillings instead of pounds, I effected the transformation at less than a sixth of the lowest assessment of the cost made by professional friends. To relieve myself from any vain charge of extravagance, I may perhaps be permitted to mention that when the property was offered for sale in London a week before I bought it, not a single bid was

made for it, owing to an apparent flaw in one of the title-deeds frightening every one off. Thus, without knowing it, I arrived on the scene at the exact psychological moment—for a purchaser; and when I got the place I found myself with a considerable sum in hand to spend upon it, and that sum has not yet been all spent. The bogey fault in the title was made good by the exchange of a few letters, and it is now absolutely unassailable.

It must also be remembered by such people as may be inclined to talk of extravagance, that it is very good business to spend a hundred pounds on one's property if the property is thereby increased in value by three hundred. I have the best of all reasons for resting in the assurance that for every pound I have spent I am three to the good. There is no economy like legitimate expenditure.

I wonder if real authorities in garden design would think I was right in treating after the Dutch fashion the little enclosed piece of ground on which I tried my prentice hand.

In order to arrive at a conclusion on this point I should like to be more fully informed as to what is congruous and what incongruous. What are the important elements to consider in the construction of a Dutch garden, and are these elements in sympathy with the foreground of such a picture as I had before me when I made up my mind on the subject?

Now I have seen many Dutch gardens in Holland, and in Cape Colony—relics of the old Dutch Colonial

days—and every one knows how conservative is this splendid if somewhat over-hospitable race. Some of the gardens lying between Cape Town and Simon's Bay, and also on the higher ground above Mossel Bay are what old-furniture dealers term "in mint condition"—I disclaim any suggestion of a pun upon the herb, which in Dutch houses at the Cape is not used in sauce for lamb. They are as they were laid out by the Solomons, the Cloetes, the Van der Byls, and the other old Dutch Colonial families; so far from adapting themselves to the tropical and sub-tropical conditions existing in the Colony, they brought their home traditions into their new surroundings with results that were both happy and profitable. There are certainly no finer or more various bulbs than those of Dutch growth at the Cape, and I have never seen anything more beautiful than the heaths on the Flats between Mowbray and Rondesbosch at the foot of the Devil's Peak of Table Mountain.

A Dutch gentleman once said to me in Rotterdam, "If you want to see a real Dutch garden you must go to the Cape, or, better still, to England—for it."

He meant that in both places greater pains are taken to maintain the original type than, generally speaking, in Holland.

I know that he spoke of what he knew, and with what chances of observation I have had, I long ago came to the conclusion that the elements of what is commonly called a Dutch garden do not differ so

THE HOUSE GARDEN

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greatly from those that went to the making of the oldest English herb and flower garden. This being so, when I asked myself how I should lay out a foreground that should be congenial with the picture seen through the window of the marble-panelled room, I knew that the garden should be as like as possible that which would be planted by the porter's wife when the Castle was at its best. The porter's lodge would join on to the gate, and one side of the gateway touches my ground, where the lodge would be; so that, with suggestions from the Chatelaine, who had seen the world, and the Chaplain, who may have been familiar with the earliest gardens in England—the monastery gardens—she would lay out the little bit of ground pretty much, I think, as I have done. In those days people had not got into the way of differentiating between gardens and gardens—there was no talk about "false notes" in design, men did not sleep uneasily o' nights lest they had made an irremediable mistake in giving hospitality to a crimson peony in a formal bed or in failing to dig up an annual that had somehow found a place in a herbaceous border. But a garden bounded by walls must be neat or nothing, and so the porter's wife made a Dutch garden without being aware of what she was doing, and I followed her example, after the lapse of a few hundred years, knowing quite well what I was doing in acting on the principle that the surroundings should suggest the garden. I know now, however, that because William the Conqueror had a fine growth of what we call *Dianthus Caryophylla* at his

Castle of Falaise, we should have scrupulously followed his example. However, the elements of a Dutch garden are geometrical, and within four walls and with four right angles one cannot but be geometrical. One cannot have the charming disorderliness of a meadow bounded by two meandering streams. That is why I know I was right in refusing to allow any irregularity in my treatment of the ground. I put my sundial exactly in the middle and made it the centre for four small beds crossed by a narrow grass path; and except for the simple central design there is no attempt at colour effect. But every one of the little beds is brilliant with tulips or pansies or antirrhinum or wallflowers, as the season suggests. There is the scent of lavender from four clumps—one at each angle of the walls—and over the western coping a pink rose climbs. To be consistent I should confine the growth of this rose to an espalier against the wall. I mean to be consistent some day in this matter and others nearly as important, and I have been so meaning for the past ten years.

I picked up some time ago four tubs of box and placed one in each corner of the grass groundwork of the design; but I soon took them away; they were far too conspicuous. They suggested that I was dragging in Holland by the hair of the head, so to speak.

It is the easiest thing in the world to spoil a good effect by over-emphasis; and any one who fancies that the chief note in a Dutch garden is an overgrowth of box makes a great mistake. It is like put-

ting up a board with "This way to the Dutch garden," planted on its face.

I remember years ago a play produced at the Haymarket, when Tree had the theatre and Mr. J. Comyns Carr was his adviser. It was a successor to an adaptation of *Called Back,* the first of the "shilling shockers," as they were styled. In one scene the curtain rose upon several of the characters sucking oranges, and they kept at it through the whole scene. That is what it is termed "local colour"; and it was hoped that every one who saw them so employed was convinced that the scene was laid in Seville. It might as well have been laid in the gallery of a theatre, where refreshment is taken in the same form.

M. Bizet achieved his "local colour" in *Carmen* in rather a more subtle way. He did not bother about oranges. The first five bars of the overture prepared us for Spain and we lived in it until the fall of the curtain, and we return to it when one of the children strums a few notes of *"L'amour est un oiseau rebelle,"* or the Toreador's braggadocio.

But although I have eaten oranges in many parts of the world since I witnessed that play at the Haymarket I have never been reminded of it, and to-day I forget what it was all about, and I cannot for the life of me recollect what was its name.

So much for the ineffectiveness of obvious effects.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH

It is a dreadful thing to live in the same town as an Atheist! I had no idea that a house in Yardley Parva would ever be occupied by such an one. I fancied that I was leaving them all behind me in London, where I could not avoid getting into touch with several; no one can unless one refuses to have anything to say to the intellectual or artistic classes. People in London are so callous that they do not seem to mind having atheists to dinner or talking with them without hostility at a club. That is all very well for London, but it doesn't do in Yardley Parva, thank God! Atheism is very properly regarded as a distinct social disqualification—almost as bad as being a Nonconformist.

Friswell is the name of our atheist. What brought him here I cannot guess. But he bought a house that had once been the rectory of a clergyman (when I mention the Clergy in this book it must be taken for granted that I mean a priest of the Church of England) and the predecessor of that clergyman had been a Rural Dean. How on earth the agent could sell him the house is a mystery that has not yet been solved, though many honest attempts in this direction have been made. The agent was blamed for not mak-

ing such inquiries as would have led to the detection of the fellow. He was held responsible for Friswell's incorporation as a burgess, just as Graham the greengrocer was held responsible for the epidemic of mumps which it is known he brought into the town in a basket of apples from Baston.

But the agent's friends make excuses for him. While admitting that he may have been culpably careless in order to secure a purchaser for a house that nobody seemed to want in spite of its hallowed associations, they are ready to affirm that these atheists have all the guile of their Master, so that even if the agent had been alert in making the essential inquiries, the man would not hesitate to give the most plausible answers in order to accomplish his object—the object of the wolf that has his eye on a sheepfold.

This may be so—I decline to express an opinion one way or another. All I know is that Friswell has written some books that are known in every part of the civilised world and in Germany as well, and that we find him when he comes here quite interesting and amusing. But needless to say we do not permit him to go too far. We do not allow ourselves to be interested in him to the jeopardising of our principles or our position in Yardley Parva. We do not allow ourselves to be amused at the reflection that he is going in the wrong direction; on the contrary, we shudder when it strikes us. But so insidious are his ways that —Heaven forgive me—I feel that he tells me much that I do not know about what is true and what is

false, and that if he were to leave the neighbourhood I should miss him.

It is strange that he should be married to a charming woman, who is a daughter of probably the most orthodox vicarage in the Midlands—a home where every Sunday is given over to such accessories of orthodoxy as an Early Service, Morning Church, Sirloin of Beef with Yorkshire Pudding, Fruit Tart and Real Egg Custard, Sunday School, the Solution of Acrostics, Evening-song, and Cold Chicken with Salad.

And yet she could ally herself with a man who does not hesitate to express the opinion that if a child dies before it is baptized it should not be assumed that anything particular happens to it, and that it was a great pity that the Church was upheld by three murderers, the first being Moses, who promulgated the Ten Commandments, the second Paul, who promulgated the Christianity accepted by the Church, and the third Constantine, who promulgated the Nicene Creed. I have heard him say this, and much more, and yet beyond a doubt his wife still adores him, laughs at him, says he is the most religious man she ever knew, and goes to church regularly!

One cannot understand such a thing as this. In her own vicarage home every breath that Mrs. Friswell breathed was an inspiration of the Orthodox—and yet she told me that her father, who was for twenty-seven years Vicar of the parish and the Bishop's Surrogate, thought very highly of Mr. Friswell and his scholarship!

That is another thing to puzzle over. Of course we know that scholarship has got nothing to do with Orthodoxy—it is the weak things of the world that have been chosen to confound the wise—but for a vicar of the Church of England to remain on friendly terms with an atheist, and to approve of his daughter's marriage with such an one, is surely not to be understood by ordinary people.

I do not know whether or not I neglected my duty in refraining from forbidding Friswell my garden when I heard him say that the God worshipped by the Hebrews with bushels of incense must have been regarded by them as occupying a position something like that of the chairman of the smoking concert; and that the High Church parson here was like a revue artist, whose ambition is to have as many changes of costume as was possible in every performance; but though I was at the point of telling him that even my toleration had its limits, yet somehow I did not like to go to such a length without Dorothy's permission; and I know that Dorothy likes him.

She says the children are fond of him, and she herself is fond of Mrs. Friswell.

"Yes," I told her, "you would not have me kill a viper because Rosamund had taken a fancy to its markings and its graceful action before darting on its prey."

"Don't be a goose," said she. "Do you suggest that Mr. Friswell is a viper?'

"Well, if a viper may be looked on as a type of all——'

"Well, if he is a viper, didn't St. Paul shake one off his hand into the fire before any harm was done? I think we would do well to leave Mr. Friswell to be dealt with by St. Paul."

"Meaning that——"

"That if the exponent of the Christianity of the Churches cannot be so interpreted in the pulpits that Mr. Friswell's sayings are rendered harmless, well, so much the worse for the Churches."

"There's such a thing as being too liberal-minded, Dorothy," said I solemnly.

"I suppose there is," said she; "but you will never suffer from it, my beloved, except in regard to the clematis which you will spare every autumn until we shall shortly have no blooms on it at all."

That was all very well; but I was uncertain about Rosamund. She is quite old enough to understand the difference between what Mr. Friswell says in the garden and what the Reverend Thomas Brown-Browne says in the pulpit. I asked her what she had been talking about to Mr. Friswell when he was here last week.

"I believe it was about Elisha," she replied. "Oh, yes; I remember I asked him if he did not think Elisha a horrid vain old man."

"You asked him that?"

"Yes; it was in the first lesson last Sunday—that about the bears he brought out of the wood to eat the poor children who had made fun of him—horrid old man!"

"Rosamund, he was a great prophet—one of the greatest," said I.

"All the same he was horrid! He must have been the vainest as well as the most spiteful old man that ever lived. What a shame to curse the poor children because they acted like children! You know that if that story were told in any other book than the Bible you would be the first to be down on Elisha. If I were to say to you, Daddy, "Go up, thou bald head!" —you know there's a little bald place on the top there that you try to brush your hair over—if I were to say that to you, what would you do?"

"I suppose I should go at you bald-headed, my dear," said I incautiously.

"I don't like the Bible made fun of," said Dorothy, who overheard what I did not mean for any but the sympathetic ears of her eldest daughter.

"I'm not making fun of it, Mammy," said the daughter. "Just the opposite. Just think of it—forty-two children—only it sounds much more when put the other way, and that makes it all the worse—forty and two poor children cruelly killed because a nasty old prophet was vain and ill-tempered!"

"It doesn't say that he had any hand in it, does it?" I suggested in defence of the Man of God.

"Well, not—directly," replied Rosamund. "But it was meant to make out that he had a hand in it. It says that he cursed them in the name of the Lord."

"And what did Mr. Friswell say about the story?" inquired Dorothy.

"Oh, he said that, being a prophet, Elisha wasn't

thinking about the present, but the future—the time we're living in—the Russian Bear or the Bolsheviks or some of the—the—what's the thing that they kill Jews with in Russia, Mammy?"

"I don't know—anything that's handy, I fancy, and not too expensive," replied the mother.

"He gave it a name—was it programme?" asked the child.

"Oh, a pogrom—a pogrom; though I fancy a programme of Russian music would have been equally effective," I put in. "Well, Mr. Friswell may be right about the bears. I suppose it's the business of a prophet to prophesy. But I should rather fancy, looking at the transaction from the standpoint of a flutter in futures, and also that the prophet had the instincts of Israel, that his bears had something to do with the Stock Exchange."

"Mr. Friswell said nothing about that," said Rosamund. "But he explained about Naaman and his leprosy and how he was cured."

"It tells us that in the Bible, my dear," said Dorothy, "so of course it is true. He washed seven times in the Jordan."

"Yes, Mr. Friswell says that it is now known that half a dozen of the complaints translated leprosy in the Bible were not the real leprosy, and it was from one of these that Naaman was suffering, and what Elisha did was simply to prescribe for him a course of seven baths in the Jordan which he knew contained sulphur or something that is good for people with that complaint. He believes in all the miracles. He

says that what was looked on as a miracle a few years ago is an everyday thing now."

"He's quite right, darling," said Dorothy approvingly. Then turning to me, "You see, Mr. Friswell has really been doing his best to keep the children right, though you were afraid that he would have a bad effect upon them."

"I see," said I. "I was too hasty in my judgment. He is a man of uncompromising orthodoxy. We shall see him holding a class in Sunday-school next, or solving acrostics instead of sleeping after the Sunday Sirloin. Did he explain the Gehazi business, Rosamund?"

"He said that he was at first staggered when he heard that Elisha had refused the suits of clothes; but if Elisha did so, he is sure that his descendants have been making up for his self-denial ever since."

"But about Gehazi catching the leprosy or whatever it was?"

"I said I thought it was too awful a punishment for so small a thing, though, of course, it was dreadfully mean of Gehazi. But Mr. Friswell laughed and said that I had forgotten that all Gehazi had to do to make himself all right again was to follow the prescription given to Naaman; so he wasn't so hard on the man after all."

"There, you see!" cried Dorothy triumphantly. "You talk to me about the bad influence Mr. Friswell may have upon the children, and now you find that he has been doing his best to make the difficult parts of the Bible credible! For my own part, I feel

that a flood of new light has been shed by him over some incidents with which I was not in sympathy before."

"All right, have it your own way," said I.

"You old goose!" said she. "Don't I know that why you have your knife in poor Friswell is simply because he thought your scheme of treillage was too elaborate."

"Anyhow I'm going to carry it out 'according to plan,' to make use of a classic phrase," said I.

And then I hurried off to the tool-house; and it was only when I had been there for some time that I remembered that the phrase which I had fancied I was quoting very aptly, was the explanation of a retreat.

I hoped that it would not strike Dorothy in that way, and induce her to remind me that it was much apter than I had desired it to be.

But there is no doubt that Friswell was right about Gehazi carrying out the prescription given to Naaman, for he remained in the service of the prophet, and he would not have been allowed to do that if he had been a leper.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH

I HAVE devoted the foregoing chapter to Friswell without, I trust, any unnecessary acrimony, but simply to show the sort of man he was who took exception to the scheme of Formal Garden that I disclosed to him long ago. He actually objected to the Formal Garden which I had in my mind.

But an atheist, like the prophet Habakkuk of the witty Frenchman, is "*capable de tout.*"

I have long ago forgiven Friswell for his vexatious objection, but I admit that I am only human, and that now and again I awake in the still hours of darkness from a nightmare in which I am tramping over formal beds of three sorts of echiverias, pursued by Friswell, flinging at me every now and again Mr. W. Robinson's volume on *Garden Design,* which, as every one knows, is an unbridled denunciation of Sir Reginald Blomfield's and Mr. Inigo Triggs's plea for *The Formal Garden.* But I soon fall asleep again with, I trust, a smile struggling to the surface of the perspiration on my brow, as I reflect upon my success in spite of Friswell and the anti-formalists.

More than twenty-five years have passed since the battle of the books on the Formal Garden took place,

adding another instance to the many brought forward by Dorothy of a garden being a battlefield instead of a place of peace. I shall refer to the fight in another chapter; for surely a stimulating spectacle was that of the distinguished horticulturalist attacking the distinguished architect with mighty billets of yews which, like Samson before his fall, had never known shears or secateur, while the distinguished architect responded with bricks pulled hastily out from his builders' wall. In the meantime I shall try to account for my treatment of my predecessor's lawn, which, as I have already mentioned, occupied all the flat space between the house and the mound with the cherries and mays and laburnums towered over by the sycamores and chestnuts.

It was all suggested to me by the offer which I had at breaking-up price of what I might call a "garden suite," consisting of a fountain, with a wide basin, and the carved stone edging for eight beds—sufficient to transform the whole area of the lawn "into something rich and strange,"—as I thought.

I had to make up my mind in a hurry, and I did so, though not without misgiving. I had never had a chance of high gardening before, and I had not so much confidence in myself as I have acquired since, misplaced though it may be, in spite of my experience. I see now what a bold step it was for me to take, and I think it is quite likely that I would have rejected it if I had had any time to consider all that it meant. I had, however, no more than twenty-four hours, and before a fourth of that time had passed I received

some encouragement in the form of my publisher's half-yearly statement.

Now, Dorothy and I had simply been garden-lovers—I mean lovers of gardens, though I don't take back the original phrase. We had never been garden enthusiasts. We had gone through the Borghese, the Villa d'Este, the Vatican, the bowers behind the Pitti and the Uffizi, and all the rest of the show-places of Italy and the French Riviera—we had spent delightful days at every garden-island of the Caribbean, and had gone on to the plateaus of South America, where every prospect pleases and there is a blaze of flowers beneath the giant yuccas—we had even explored Kew together, and we had lived within a stone's throw of Holland House and the painters' pleasaunces of Melbury Road, but with all we had remained content to think of gardens without making them any important part of our life. And this being so, I now see how arrogant was that act of mine in binding myself down to a transaction with as far-reaching consequences to me as that of Dr. Faustus entailed to him.

Now I acknowledge that when I looked out over the green lawn and thought of all that I had let myself in for, I felt anything but arrogant. The destruction of a lawn is, like the state of matrimony in the Church Service, an act not to be lightly entered into; and I think I might have laid away all that stone-work which had come to me, until I should become more certain of myself—that is how a good many people think within a week or two of marriage—if I had not,

with those doubts hanging over me, wandered away from the lawn and within sight of the straggling orchard with its rows of ill-planted plums and apples that had plainly borne nothing but leaves for many years. They were becoming an eye-sore to me, and the thought came in a flash:—

"This is the place for a lawn. Why not root up these unprofitable and uninteresting things and lay down the space in grass?"

Why not, indeed? The more I thought over the matter the more reconciled I became to the transformation of the house lawn. I felt as I fancy the father of a well-beloved daughter must feel when she tells him that she has promised to marry the son of the house at the other side of his paddock. He is reconciled to the idea of parting with her by the reflection that she will still be living beyond the fence, and that he will enjoy communion with her under altered conditions. That is the difference between parting *with* a person and parting *from* a person.

And now, when I looked at the house lawn, I saw that it had no business to be there. It was an element of incongruity. It made the house look as if it were built in the middle of a field. A field is all very well in its place, and a house is all very well in its place, but the place of the house is not in the middle of a field. It looks its worst there and the field looks its worst when the house is overlooking it.

I think that it is this impression of incongruity that has made what is called The Formal Garden a necessity of these days. We want a treatment that will

take away from the abruptness of the mass of bricks and mortar rising straight up from the simplest of Nature's elements. We want a hyphenated House-and-Garden which we can look on as one and indivisible, like the First French Republic.

In short, I think that the making of the Formal Garden is the marriage ceremony that unites the house to its site, "and the twain shall be one flesh."

That is really the relative position of the two. I hold that there are scores of forms of garden that may be espoused to a house; and I am not sure that such a term as Formal is not misleading to a large number of people who think that Nature should begin the moment that one steps out of one's house, and that nothing in Nature is formal. I am not going to take on me any definition of the constituent elements of what is termed the Formal Garden, but I will take it on me to stand up against such people as would have us believe that the moment you enter a house you leave Nature outside. A house is as much a product of Nature as a woodland or a rabbit warren or a lawn. The original house of that product of Nature known as man was that product of Nature known as a cave. For thousands of years before he got into his cave he had made his abode in the woodland. It was when he found he could do better than hang on to his bough and, with his toes, take the eggs out of whatever nests he could get at, that he made the cave his dwelling; and thousands of years later he found that it was more convenient to build up the clay into the shape of a cave than to scoop out the hillside when he wanted

an addition to the dwelling provided for him in the hollows made by that natural incident known as a landslide. But the dwelling-house of to-day is nothing more than a cave built up instead of scooped out. Whether made of brick, stone, or clay—all products of Nature—it is fundamentally the same as the primeval cave dwelling; just as a Corinthian column is fundamentally identical with the palm-tree which primeval man brought into his service when he wished to construct a dwelling independent of the forest of his pendulous ancestors. The rabbit is at present in the stage of development of the men who scooped out their dwellings; the beaver is in the stage of development of the men who gave up scooping and took to building; and will any one suggest that a rabbit warren or a beaver village is not Nature?

Sir R. Blomfield, in his book to which I have alluded, will not have this at all. "The building," he says, "cannot resemble anything in Nature, unless you are content with a mud hut and cover it with grass." That may be true enough; but great architect that he is, he would have shown himself more faithful to his profession if he had been more careful about his foundations. If he goes a little deeper into the matter he will find that man has not yet been civilised or "architected" out of the impressions left upon him by his thousands of years of cave-dwelling, any more than he has been out of his arboreal experiences of as many thousand years. While, as a boy, he retains vividly those impressions of his ancestors which gradually wear off—though never so

completely as to leave no trace behind them—he cannot be restrained from climbing trees and enjoying the motion of a swing; and his chief employment when left to his own devices is scooping out a cave in a sand-bank. For the first ten or fifteen years of his life a man is in his instincts many thousand years nearer to his prehistoric relations than he is when he is twenty; after that the inherited impressions become blurred, but never wholly wiped out. He is still stirred to the deepest depths of his nature by the long tresses of a woman, just as was his early parent, who knew that he had to depend on such long tresses to drag the female on whom he had set his heart to his cave.

Scores of examples could be given of the retention of these inherited instincts; but many of them are in more than one sense of the phrase, "far-fetched." When, however, we know that the architectural design which finds almost universal favour is that of the column or the pilaster—which is little more than the palm-tree of the Oriental forest of many thousand years ago—I think we are justified in assuming that we have not yet quite lost sight of the fact that our dwellings are most acceptable when they retain such elements as are congenial with their ancient homes, which homes were undoubtedly incidents in the natural landscape.

That is why I think that the right way to claim its appropriateness for what is called the Formal Garden is, not that a house has no place in Nature, and therefore its immediate surrounding should be

more or less artificial, but that the house is an incident in Nature modified by what is termed Art, and therefore the surround should be of the same character.

At the same time, I beg leave to say in this place that I am not so besotted upon my own opinion as to be incapable of acknowledging that Sir R. Blomfield's belief that a house can never be regarded as otherwise than wholly artificial, may commend itself to a much larger clientèle than I can hope for.

In any case the appropriateness of the Formal Garden has been proved (literally) down to the ground. As a matter of fact, no one ever thought of questioning it in England until some remarkable innovators, who called themselves Landscape Gardeners, thought they saw their way to work on a new system, and in doing so contrived to destroy many interesting features of the landscape.

But really, landscape gardening has never been consistently defined. Its exponents have always been slovenly and inconsistent in stating their aims; so that while they claim to be all for giving what they call Nature the supreme place in their designs, it must appear to most people that the achievement of these designs entails treating Nature most unnaturally. The landscape gardeners of the early years of the cult seem to me to be in the position of the boy of whom the parents said, " Charlie is so very fond of animals that we are going to make a butcher of him." To read their enunciation of the principles by which they professed to be inspired is to make one

feel that they thought the butchery of a landscape the only way to beautify it.

But, I repeat, the examples of their work with which we are acquainted show but a small amount of consistency with their professions of faith. When we read the satires that were written upon their work in the eighteenth century, we really feel that the lampooners have got hold of the wrong brief, and that they are ridiculing the upholders of the Formal Garden.

So far as I was concerned in dealing with my insignificant garden home, I did not concern myself with principles or theories or schools or consistency or inconsistency; I went ahead as I pleased, and though Friswell shook his head—I have not finished with him yet on account of that mute expression of disagreement with my aims—I enjoyed myself thoroughly, if now and again with qualms of uneasiness, in laying out what I feel I must call the House Garden rather than the Formal Garden, where the lawn had spread itself abroad, causing the wing of the house to have something of the appearance of a lighthouse springing straight up from a green sea. As it is now, that green expanse suggests a tropical sea with many brilliant islands breaking up its placid surface.

That satisfies me. If the lighthouse remains, I have given it a *raison d'être* by strewing the sea with islands.

I made my appeal to Olive, the practical one.

"Yes," she said, after one of her thoughtful intervals. "Yes, I think it does look naturaler."

And I do believe it does.

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CHAPTER THE NINTH

I DIFFER from many people who know more about garden-making than I know or than I ever shall know, in believing that it is unnecessary for the House Garden—I will adopt this name for it—to be paved between the beds. I have seen this paving done in many cases, and to my mind it adds without any need whatsoever a certain artificiality to the appearance of this feature of the garden. By all means let the paths be paved with stone or brick; I have had all mine treated in this way, and thereby made them more natural in appearance, suggesting, as they do, the dry watercourse of a stream: every time I walk on them I remember the summer aspect of that beautiful watercourse at Funchal in the island of Madeira, which becomes a thoroughfare for several months of the year; but I am sure that the stone edgings of the beds and of the fountain basin look much better surrounded by grass. All that one requires to do in order to bring the House Garden in touch with the house is to bring something of the material of the house on to the lawn, and to force the house to reciprocate with a mantle of ampelopsis patterned with clematis.

All that I did was to remove the turf within the

boundary of my stone edging and add the necessary soil. A week was sufficient for all, including the fountain basin and the making of the requisite attachment to the main water pipe which supplies the garden from end to end.

And here let me advise any possible makers of garden fountains on no account to neglect the introduction of a second outlet and tap for the purpose of emptying the pipe during a frost. The cost will be very little extra, and the operation will prevent so hideous a catastrophe as the bursting of a pipe passing through or below the concrete basin. My plumber knew his business, and I have felt grateful to him for making such a provision against disaster, when I have found six inches of ice in the basin after a week's frost.

At first I was somewhat timid over the planting of the stone-edged beds. I had heard of carpet bedding, and I had heard it condemned without restraint. I had also seen several examples of it in public gardens at seaside places and elsewhere, which impressed me only by the ingenuity of their garishness. Some one, too, had put the veto upon any possible tendency on my part to such a weakness by uttering the most condemnatory words in the vocabulary of art—Early Victorian! To be on the safe side I planted the beds with herbaceous flowers, only reserving two for fuchsias, of which I have always been extremely fond.

I soon came to find out that a herbaceous scheme in that place was a mistake. For two months we had

to look at flowers growing, for a month we had to look at things rampant, and for a month we had to watch things withering. At no time was there an equal show of colour in all the beds. The blaze of beauty I had hoped for never appeared: here and there we had a flash of it, but it soon flickered out, much to our disappointment. If the period of the ramp had synchronised for all the beds it would not have been so bad; but when one subject was rampant the others were couchant, and no one was pleased.

The next year we tried some more dwarf varieties and such annuals as verbenas, zinnias, scabious, godetias, and clarkias, but although every one came on all right, yet they did not come on simultaneously, and I felt defrauded of my chromatic effects. A considerable number of people thought the beds quite a success; but we could not see with their eyes, and our feeling was one of disappointment.

Happily, at this time I bought for a few shillings a few boxes of the ordinary *echeveria secunda glauca,* and, curiously enough, the same day I came upon a public place where several beds of the same type as mine, set in an enclosed space of emerald grass, were planted with echeveria and other succulents, in patterns, with a large variety of brilliantly-coloured foliage and a few dwarf calceolarias and irisines. In a moment I thought I saw that this was exactly what I needed—whether it was carpet bedding or early Victorian or inartistic, this was what I wanted, and I knew that I should not be happy until I got it. Every bed looked like a stanza of Keats, or a box of enamels

from the Faubourg de Magnine in Limoges, where Nicholas Laudin worked.

That was three years ago, and although I planted out over three thousand echeverias last summer, I had not to buy another box of the same variety; I had only to find some other succulents and transplant some violas in order to achieve all that I hoped for from these beds. For three years they have been altogether satisfying with their orderly habits and reposeful colouring. The glauca is the shade that the human eye can rest upon day after day without weariness, and the pink and blue and yellow and purple violas which I asked for a complement of colours, do all that I hoped they would do.

Of course we have friends who walk round the garden, look at those beds with dull eyes of disapproval, and walk on after imparting information on some contentious point, such as the necessity to remove the shoots from the briers of standard roses, or the assurance that the slugs are fond of the leaves of hollyhock. We have an occasional visitor who says,—

"Isn't carpet-bedding rather old-fashioned?"

So I have seen a lady in the spacious days of the late seventies shake her head and smile pityingly in a room furnished with twelve ribbon-back chairs made by the great Director.

"Old-fashioned—gone out years ago!" were the terms of her criticism.

But so far as I am concerned I would have no more objection to one of the ribbon-borders of long ago, if

it was in a suitable place, than I would have to a round dozen of ribbon-back chairs in a panelled room with a mantelpiece by Bossi and a glass chandelier by one of the Adam Brothers. It is only the uninformed who are ready to condemn something because they think that it is old-fashioned, just as it is only the ignorant who extol something because it happens to be antique. I was once lucky enough to be able to buy an exquisitely chased snuff-box because the truthful catalogue had described it as made of pinchbeck. For the good folk in the saleroom the word pinchbeck was enough. It was associated in their minds with something that was a type of the meretricious. But the pinchbeck amalgam was a beautiful one, and the workmanship of some of the articles made of it was usually of the highest class. Now that people are better educated they value—or at least some of them value—a pinchbeck buckle or snuff-box for its artistic beauty.

We see our garden more frequently than do any of our visitors, and we are satisfied with its details—within bounds, of course. It has never been our ambition to emulate the authorities who control the floral designs blazing in the borders along the sea-front of one of our watering-places, which are admired to distraction by trippers under the influence of a rag-time band and other stimulants. We do not long so greatly to see a floral Union Jack in all its glory at our feet, or any loyal sentiment lettered in dwarf beet and blue lobelia against a background of crimson irisine. We know very well that such

marvels are beyond our accomplishment. What we hoped for was to have under our eyes for three months of the year a number of beds full of wallflowers, tulips, and hyacinths, and for four months equally well covered with varied violas, memsembrianthium, mauve ageratum, the præcox dwarf roses, variegated cactus used sparingly, and as many varieties of echeveria used lavishly, with here and there a small dracæna or perhaps a tuft of feathery grass or the accentuations of a few crimson begonias to show that we are not afraid of anything.

We hold that the main essential of the beds of the House Garden is "finish." They must look well from the day they are planted in the third week of May until they are removed in the last week of October. We do not want that barren interval of a month or six weeks when the tulips have been lifted and their successors are growing. We do not want a single day of empty beds or colourless beds; we do not want to see a square inch of the soil. We want colour and contour under our eyes from the first day of March until the end of October, and we get it. We have no trouble with dead leaves or drooping blooms—no trouble with snails or slugs or leather-jackets. Every bed is presentable for the summer when the flowers that bloom in the spring have been removed; the effect is only agreeably diversified when the begonias show themselves in July.

Is the sort of thing that I have described to be called carpet-bedding? I know not and I trow not; all that I know is that it is the sort of thing that suits us.

Geometry is its foundation and geometry represents all that is satisfying, because it is Nature's closest ally when Nature wishes to produce Beauty. Almost every flower is a geometrical study. Let rose bushes ramp as they may, the sum of all their ramping is that triumph of geometry, the rose. Let the clematis climb as unruly as it may, the end of its labours is a geometrical star; let the dandelion be as disagreeable as it pleases—I don't intend to do so really, only for the sake of argument— but its rows of teeth are beautifully geometrical, and the fairy finish of its life, which means, alas! the magical beginning of a thousand new lives, is a geometrical marvel.

But I do not want to accuse myself of excusing myself over much for my endeavour to restore a fashion which I was told had "gone out." I only say that if what I have done in my stone-edged geometrical beds is to be slighted because some fool has called it carpet-bedding, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that I have worked on the lines of Nature. Nature is the leader of the art of carpet-bedding on geometrical lines. Nature's most beautiful spring mattress is a carpet bed of primroses, wild hyacinths, daffodils, and daisies—every one of them a geometrical marvel. As a matter of fact the design of every formal bed in our garden is a copy of a snow crystal.

Of course, so far as conforming to the dictates of fashion in a garden is concerned, I admit that I am a nonconformist. I do not think that any one who has any real affection for the development of a garden will be ready to conform to any fashion of the hour

in gardening. I believe that there never was a time when the artistic as well as the scientific side of garden design was so fully understood or so faithfully adhered to as it is just now. There is nothing to fear from the majority of the exponents of the art; it is with the unconsidering amateurs that the danger lies. The dangerous amateur is the one who assumes that there is fashion in gardening as there is a fashion in garments, and that one must at all hazards live up to the *dernier cri* or get left behind in the search for the right thing. For instance, within the last six or seven years it has become "the right thing" to have a sunk garden. Now a sunk garden is, literally, as old as the hills; the channel worn in the depth of a valley by an intermittent stream becomes a sunk garden in the summer. The Dutch, not having the advantage of hills and vales, were compelled to imitate Nature by sinking their flower-patches below the level of the ground. They were quite successful in their attempt to put the garden under their eyes; by such means they were able fully to admire the patterns in which their bulbs were arranged. But where is the sense in adopting in England the handicap of Holland? It is obvious that if one can look down upon a garden from a terrace one does not need to sink the ground to a lower level. And yet I have known of several instances of people insisting on having a sunk garden just under a terrace. They had heard that sunk gardens were the fashion and they would not be happy if there was a possibility of any one thinking that they were out of the fashion.

Then the charm of the rock garden was being largely advertised and talked about, so mounds of broken bricks and stones and "slag" and rubbish arose alongside the trim villas, and the occupants slept in peace knowing that those heights of rubbish represented the height—the heights of fashion. Then came the "crevice" fashion. A conscientious writer discoursed of the beauty of the little things that grow between the bricks of old walls, and forthwith yards of walls, guaranteed to be of old bricks, sprang up in every direction, with hand-made crevices in which little gems that had never been seen on walls before, were stuck, and simple nurserymen were told that they were long behind the time because they were unable to meet the demand for house leeks. I have seen a ten-feet length of wall raised almost in the middle of a villa garden for no other purpose than to provide a foot-hold for lichens. The last time I saw it it was providing a space for the exhibition of a printed announcement that an auction would take place in the house.

But by far the most important of the schemes which of late have been indulged in for adding interest to the English garden, is the "Japanese style." The "Chinese Taste," we all know, played a very important part in many gardens in the eighteenth century, as it did in other directions in the social life of England. The flexible imagination of Thomas Chippendale found it as easy to introduce the leading Chinese notes in his designs as the leading French notes; and his genius was so well controlled that his pieces "in

the Chinese Taste" did not look at all incongruous in an English mansion. The Chinese wallpaper was a beautiful thing in its way, nor did it look out of place in a drawing-room with the beautifully florid mirrors of Chippendale design on the walls, and the noble lacquer caskets and cabinets that stood below them. Under the same impulse Sir Thomas Chambers was entrusted with the erection of the great pagoda in Kew Gardens, and Chinese junks were moored alongside the banks to enable visitors to drink tea "in the Chinese Taste." The Staffordshire potters reproduced on their ware some excellent patterns that had originated with the Celestials, and in an attempt to be abreast of the time, Goldsmith made his *Citizen of the World* a Chinese gentleman.

For obvious reasons, however, there was no Japanese craze at that time. Little was known of the supreme art of Japan, and nothing of the Japanese Garden. Now we seem to be making up for this deprivation of the past, and the Japanese style of gardening is being represented in many English grounds. I think that nothing could be more interesting, or, in its own way, more exquisite: but is it not incongruous in its new-found home?

It is nothing of the sort, provided that it is not brought into close proximity to the English garden. In itself it is charming, graceful, and grateful in every way; but unless its features are kept apart from those of the English garden, it becomes incongruous and unsatisfactory. It is, however, only necessary to put it in its place, which should be as far away as possible

from the English house and House Garden, and it will be found fully to justify its importation. It possesses all the elements that go to the formation of a real garden, the strongest of these being, in my opinion, a clear and consistent design; unless a garden has both form and design it is worth no consideration, except from the very humblest standpoint.

Its peculiar charm seems to me to be found in what the nurseryman's catalogue calls the "dwarf habit." It is essentially among the miniatures. Though it may be as extensive as one pleases to make it, yet it gains rather than loses when treated as its trees are by the skilful hands of the miniaturist. Without suggesting that it should be reduced to toy dimensions, yet I am sure that it should be so that no tall human being should be seen in it. It is the garden of a small race. A big Englishman should not be allowed into it. It would not be giving it fair play.

Fancying that I have put its elements into a nutshell, carrying my minimising to a minimum, I repeat the last sentence to Dorothy.

"You would not exclude Mr. Friswell," said she.

"Atheist Friswell is not life-size: he may go without rebuke into the most miniature Japanese garden in Bond Street," I reply gratefully.

"And how about Mrs. Friswell?" she asks.

"She is three sizes too big, even in her chapel shoes," I replied.

Mrs. Friswell, in spite of her upbringing—perhaps

ROSE PILLAR AND PERGOLA

on account of it—wears the heelless shoes of Little Bethel.

"Then Mr. Friswell will never be seen in a Japanese garden," said Dorothy.

She does like Mrs. Friswell.

CHAPTER THE TENTH

But there is in my mind one garden in which I should like to see the tallest and most truculent of Englishmen. It is the Tiergarten at Berlin. I recollect very vividly the first time that I passed through the Brandenburger Gate to visit some friends who occupied a flat in the block of buildings known as "In den Zelten." I had just come within sight of the sentry at the gate-house when I saw him rush to the door of the guard-room and in a few seconds the whole guard had turned out with a trumpet and a drum. I was surprised, for I had not written to say that I was coming, and I was quite unused to such courtesy either in Berlin or any other city where there is a German population.

Before the incident went further I became aware of the fact that all the vehicles leaving "Unter den Linden" had become motionless, and that the officers who were in some of them were standing up at the salute. The only carriage in motion was a landau drawn by a pair of gray horses, with a handsome man in a plain uniform and the ordinary helmet of an infantry soldier sitting alone with his face to the horses. I knew him in a moment, though I had never seen him before—the Crown Prince Frederick, the

husband of our Princess Royal—the "Fritz" of the intimate devotional telegrams to "Augusta" from the battlefields of France in 1870.

That Crown Prince was the very opposite to his truculent son and that contemptible blackguard, his son's son. Genial, considerate, and unassuming, disliking all display and theatrical posing, he was much more of an English gentleman than a German Prince. His son Wilhelm had even then begun to hate him—so I heard from a high personage of the Court.

I am certain that it was his reading of the campaign of 1870-1 that set this precious Wilhelm—this Emperor of the penny gaff—on his last enterprise. If one hunts up the old newspapers of 1870 one will read in every telegram from the German front of the King of Prussia and the Crown Prince marching to Victory, in the campaign started by a forgery and a lie, by that fine type of German trickery, unscrupulousness, brutality, and astuteness, Bismarck. Wilhelm could not endure the thought of the glory of his house being centred in those who had gone before him, and he chafed at the years that were passing without history repeating itself. He could with difficulty restrain himself from his attempt to dominate the world until his first-begotten was old enough to dominate the demi-monde of Paris—"Wilhelm to-day successfully stormed Le Chemin des Dames," was the telegram that he sent to the Empress, in imitation of those sent by his grandfather to his Augusta. *Le Chemin des Dames!*—beyond a doubt his dream was to give France to his eldest, England to his second, and

Russia to the third of the litter. After that, as he said to Mr. Gerard, he would turn his attention to America.

That was the dream of this Bonaparte done in German silver, and now his house is left unto him desolate—unto him whose criminality, sustained by the criminal conceit of his subjects, left thousands of houses desolate for evermore.

But we are now in the Garden of Peace, whose sweet savour should not be allowed to become rank by the mention of the name of the instigator of the German butcheries.

There is little under my eyes in this garden to remind me of one on the Rhine where I spent a summer a good many years ago. Its situation was ideal. The island of legends, Nonnenworth, was all that could be seen from one of the garden-houses; and one of the windows in the front was arranged in small squares of glass stained, but retaining their transparency, in various colours—crimson, pink, dark blue, ultramarine, and two degrees yellow. Through these theatrical mediums we were exhorted to view the romantic island, so that we had the rare chance of seeing Nonnenworth bathed in blood, or in flames of fire. It was undoubtedly a great privilege, but I only availed myself of it once; though our host, who must have looked through those glasses thousands of times, was always to be found gazing through the flaming yellow at the unhappy isle.

From the vineyard nearer the house we had the finest view of the ruins of the Drachenfels, and, on the

other side of the Rhine, of Rolandseck. Godesburg was farther away, but we used to drive through the lovely avenue of cherry-trees and take the ferry to the hotel gardens where we lunched.

Another of the features of the great garden of our villa was a fountain whose chief charm was found in an arrangement by which, on treading on a certain slab of stone at the invitation of our host, the uninitiated were met by a deluging squirt of water.

This was the lighter side of hospitality; but it was at one time to be found in many English gardens, one of the earliest being at our Henry's Palace of Nonsuch.

In another well-built hut there was the apparatus of a game which is popular aboard ship in the Tropics: I believe it is called Bull; it is certainly an adaptation of the real bull. There is a framework of apertures with a number painted on each, the object of the player being to throw a metal disc resembling a quoit into the central opening. Another hut had a pole in the middle and cords with a ring at the end of each suspended from above, and the trick was to induce the ring to catch on to a particular hook in a set arranged round the pole. These were the games of exercise; but the intellectual visitors had for their diversion an immense globe of silvered glass which stood on a short pillar and enabled one to get in absurd perspective a reflection of the various parts of the garden where it was placed. This toy is very popular in some parts of France, and I have heard that about sixty years ago it was to be found in many English

gardens also. It is a great favourite in the German *lustgarten.*

These are a few of the features of a private garden which may commend themselves to some of my friends; but the least innocuous will never be found within my castle walls. I would not think them worth mentioning but for the fact that yesterday a visitor kept rubbing us all over with sandpaper, so to speak, by talking enthusiastically about her visits to Germany, and in the midst of the autumn calm in our garden, telling us how beautifully her friend Von Bosche had arranged his grounds. She had the impudence to point to one of the most impregnable of my "features," saying with a smile,—

"The Count would not approve of that, I'm afraid."

"I am so glad," said Dorothy sweetly. "If I thought that there was anything here of which he would approve, I should put on my gardening boots and trample it as much out of existence as our relations are with those contemptible counts and all their race."

And then, having found the range, I brought my heavy guns into action and "the case began to spread."

I trust that I made myself thoroughly offensive, and when I recall some of the things I said, my conscience acquits me of any shortcomings in this direction.

"You were very wise," said Dorothy; "but I think you went too far when you said, 'Good-bye, Miss Haldane.' I saw her wince at that."

"I knew that I would never have a chance of speaking to her again," I replied.

"Oh, yes; but—Haldane—Haldane! If you had made it Snowden or MacDonald it would not have been so bad; but Haldane!"

"I said Haldane because I meant Haldane, and because Haldane is a synonym for colossal impudence—the impudence of a police-court attorney defending a prostitute with whom he was on terms of disgusting intimacy. What a trick it was to leave the War Office, out of which he knew he would be turned, and then cajole his friend Asquith into giving him a peerage and the Seals, so that he might have his pension of five thousand pounds a year for the rest of his natural life! If that is to be condoned, all that I can say is that we must revise all our notions of political pettifogging. I forget at the moment how many retired Lord Chancellors there are who are pocketing their pension, but have done nothing to earn it."

"What, do you call voting through thick and thin with your party nothing?"

"I don't. That is how, what we call a sovereign to-day is worth only nine shillings, and a man who got thirty shillings a week as a gardener only gets three pounds now: thirty shillings in 1913 was more than three pounds to-day. And in England——"

"Hush, hush. Remember, 'My country right or wrong.'"

"I do remember. That is why I rave. When 'my country, right or wrong' is painted out and 'my

party, right or wrong' substituted, isn't it time one raved?"

"You didn't talk in that strain when you wrote a leading article every day for a newspaper."

"I admit it; but—but—well, things hadn't come to a head in those old days."

"You mean that they had not come into your head, *mon vieux,* if you will allow me to say so."

I did allow her to say so—she had said so before asking my leave, which on the whole I admit is a very good way of saying things.

To be really frank, I confess that I was very glad that the dialogue ended here. I fancied the possibility of her having stored away in that wonderful group of pigeon holes which she calls her memory, a memorandum endorsed with the name of Campbell-Bannerman or a *dossier* labelled "Lansdowne." For myself I recollect very well that a vote of the representatives of the People had declared that Campbell-Bannerman had left the country open to destruction by his failure to provide an adequate supply of cordite. In the days of poor Admiral Byng such negligence would have been quickly followed by an execution; but with the politician it was followed by a visit to Buckingham Palace and a decoration as a hero. When it was plain that Lord Lansdowne had made, and was still making, a muddle of the South African War, he was promoted to a more important post in the Government—namely, the Foreign Office. With such precedents culled from the past, why should any one be surprised to find the instigator of the Gallipoli gamble, whose

responsibility was proved by a Special Commission of Inquiry, awarded the most important post next to that of the Prime Minister?

Yes, on the whole I was satisfied to accept my Dorothy's smiling rebuke with a smile; and the sequel of the incident showed me that I was wise in this respect; for I found her the next day looking with admiring eyes at our Temple.

Our Temple was my masterpiece, and it was the "feature" which our visitor had, without meaning it, commended so extravagantly when she had assured us that her friend Count Von Bosche would not have approved of it.

"I think, my child, now that I come to think of it, that your single-sentence retort respecting the value of the Count's possible non-approval was more effective than my tirade about the vulgarity of German taste in German gardens, especially that one at Honnef-on-Rhine, where I was jocularly deluged with Rhine water. You know how to hit off such things. You are a born sniper."

"Sniping is a woman's idea of war," said Dorothy.

"I don't like to associate women and warfare," said I shaking my head.

"That is because of your gentle nature, dear," said she with all the smoothness of a smoothing-iron fresh from a seven-times heated furnace. "But isn't it strange that in most languages the word War is a noun feminine?"

"They were always hard on woman in those days," said I vaguely. "But they're making up for it now."

"What are you talking about?" she cried. "Why, they're harder than ever on women in this country. Haven't they just insisted on enchaining them with the franchise, with the prospect of seats in the House of Commons? Oh, Woman—poor Woman!—poor, poor Woman—what have you done to deserve this?"

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH

The Temple is one of the " features " which began to grow with great rapidity in connection with the House Garden. And here let me say that, in my opinion, one of the most fascinating elements of the House Garden is the way in which its character develops. To watch its development is as interesting as to watch the growth of a dear child, only it is never wilful, and the child is—sometimes. There is no wilfulness in the floral part: as I have already explained, the " dwarf habit " of the stock prevents all ramping and every form of rebellion: but it is different with the " features." I have found that every year brings its suggestions of development in many directions, and surely this constitutes the main attractiveness of working out any scheme of horticulture.

I have found that one never comes to an end in this respect; and I am sure that this accounts for the great popularity of the House Garden, in spite of its enemies having tried to abolish it by calling it Formal. The time was when one felt it necessary to make excuses for it—Mr. Robinson, one of the most eminent of its detractors, was, and still is, I am happy to be able to say, the writer to whom we all apply for advice in an emergency. He

is Æsculapius living on the happiest terms with Flora.

But when we who are her devotees wish to build a Temple for her worship, we don't consult Æsculapius: he is a physician, not an architect, and Mr. Robinson has been trying to convince us for over twenty years that an architect is not the person to consult, for he knows nothing about the matter. Æsculapius is on the side of Nature, we are told, and he has been assuring us that the architect is not; but in spite of all its opponents, the garden of form and finish is the garden of to-day. Every one who wishes to have a garden worth talking about—a garden to look out upon from a house asks for a garden of form and finish.

I am constantly feeling that I am protesting too much in its favour, considering that it needs no apologist at this time of day, when, as I have just said, opinion on its desirability is not divided, so I will hasten to relieve myself of the charge of accusation by apology. Only let me say that the beautiful illustrations to Mr. Robinson's volume entitled *Garden Design and Architects' Gardens*—they are by Alfred Parsons—go far, in my opinion, to prove exactly the opposite to what they are designed to prove. We have pictures of stately houses and of comparatively humble houses, in which we are shown the buildings starting up straight out of the landscape, with a shaggy tree or group of trees cutting off, at a distance of only a few yards from the walls, some of the most interesting architectural features; we have pictures of mansions with a woodland behind them and a river

flowing in front, and of mansions in the very midst of trees, and looking at every one of them we are conscious of that element of incongruity which takes away from every sense of beauty. In fact, looking at the woodcuts, finely executed as they are, we are forced to limit our observation to the architecture of the houses only; for there is nothing else to observe. We feel as if we were asked to admire an unfinished work—as if the owner of the mansion had spent all his money on the building and so was compelled to break off suddenly before the picture that he hoped to make of the "place" was complete or approaching completeness.

Mr. Robinson's strongest objection is to "clipping." He regards with abhorrence what he calls after Horace Walpole, "vegetable sculpture." Well, last year, being in the neighbourhood of one of the houses which he illustrates as an example of his "natural" style of gardening, I thought I should take the opportunity of verifying his quotations. I visited the place, but when I arrived at what I was told was the entrance, I felt certain that I had been misdirected, for I found myself looking through a wrought-iron gate at an avenue bounded on both sides with some of the most magnificent clipped box hedges I had ever seen. Within I was overwhelmed with the enormous masses treated in the same way. It was not hedges they were, but walls—massive fortifications, ten feet high and five thick, and all clipped! I never saw such examples of topiary work. To stand among these *bêtes noires* of Mr. Robinson made

one feel as if one were living among the mastodons and other monstrosities of the early world: the smallest suggested both in form and bulk the Jumbo of our youth—no doubt it had a trunk somewhere, but it was completely hidden. The lawn—at the bottom of which, by the way, there stood the most imposing garden-house I had ever seen outside the grounds of Stowe—was divided geometrically by the awful bodies of mastodons, mammoths, elephants, and hippopotamuses, the effect being hauntingly Wilsonian, Wagnerian, and nightmarish, so that I was glad to hurry away to where I caught a glimpse of some geometrical flower beds, with patterns delightfully worked in shades of blue—Lord Roberts heliotrope, ageratum, and verbena.

I asked the head-gardener, whom the war had limited to two assistants, if he spent much time over the clipping, and he told me that it took two trained men doing nothing else but clipping those walls for six weeks out of every year!

From what Mr. Robinson has written one gathers that he regards the clipping of trees as equal in enormity to the clipping of coins—perhaps even more so. If that is the case, it is lucky for those topiarists that he is not in the same position as Sir Charles Mathews.

And the foregoing is a faithful description of the "landscape" around one of the houses illustrated in his book as an example of the "naturalistic" style.

But perhaps Mr. Robinson's ideas have become modified, as those of the owner of the house must have done during the twenty-five years that have

elapsed since the publication of his book, subjecting Mr. Blomfield (as he was then) and Mr. Inigo Triggs to a criticism whose severity resembles that of the *Quarterly Review* of a hundred years ago, or the *Saturday* of our boyhood.

To return to my Temple, within whose portals I swear that I have said my last word respecting the old battle of the styles, I look on its erection as the first progeny of the matrimonial union of the house with its garden. I have mentioned the mound encircled with flowering shrubs at the termination of the lawn. I am unable to say what part was played by this raised ground in the economy of the Norman Castle, but before I had been looking at it for very long I perceived that it was clearly meant to be the site of some building that would be in keeping with the design of the garden below it—some building in which one could sit and obtain the full enjoyment of the floral beds which were now crying out with melodious insistence for admiration.

The difficulty was to know in what form the building should be cast. I reckoned that I had a free choice in this matter. The boundary wall of the Castle is, of course, free from all architectural trammels. I could afford to ignore it. If the Keep or the Barbican had been within sight, my freedom in this respect would have been curtailed to the narrowest limits: I should have been compelled to make the Norman or the Decorated the style, for anything else would have seemed incongruous in close proximity to a recognised type; but under the existing con-

ditions I saw that the attempt to carry out in this place the Norman tradition would result in something that would seem as great a mockery as the sham castle near Bath.

But I perceived that if I could not carry out the Norman tradition I might adopt the eighteenth century tradition respecting a garden building, and erect one of the classic temples that found favour with the great garden makers of that period—something frankly artificial, but eminently suggestive of the Italian taste which the designers had acquired in Italy.

I have wondered if the erection of these classical buildings in English gardens did not seem very incongruous and artificial when they were first brought before the eyes of the patron; and the conclusion that I have come to is that they seemed as suitable to an English home as did the pure Greek façade of the mansion itself, the fact being that there is no English style of architecture. Italy gave us the handsomest style for our homes, and when people were everywhere met with classical façades—when the Corinthian pillar with, perhaps, its modified Roman entablature, was to be seen in every direction, the classical garden temple was accepted as in perfect harmony with its surroundings. So the regular couplets of Dryden, Pope, and a score of lesser versifiers were acclaimed as the most natural and reasonable form for the expression of their opinions. Thus I hold that, however unenterprising the garden designers were in being content to copy Continental

THE TEMPLE AND THE TEMPLARS

models instead of inventing something as original as Keats in the matter of form, the modern garden designer has only to copy in order to produce—well, a copy of the formality of their time. But if people nowadays do not wish their gardens to reflect the tastes of their ancestors for the classical tradition, they will be very foolish if they do not adopt something better—when they find it.

Of course I am now still referring to the garden out of which the house should spring. The moment that you get free from the compelling influence of the house, you may go as you please; and to my mind you will be as foolish if you do not do something quite different from the House Garden as you would be if you were to do anything different within sight of the overpowering House—almost as foolish as the people who made a beautiful fountain garden and then flung it at the head of that natural piece of water, the Serpentine.

My temple was to be in full view of the house, and I wished to maintain the tradition of a certain period, so I drew out my plans accordingly. I had space only for something about ten feet square, and I found out what the simplest form of such a building would cost. It could be done in stone for some hundreds of pounds, in deal for less than a fourth of that sum.

Both estimates were from well-known people with all the facilities for turning out good work at the lowest figure of profit; but both estimates made me heavy-hearted. I tried to make up my mind not to spend the rest of my life in the state of the Children

of Israel when their Temple was swept away; but within six months I had my vision restored, and unlike the old people who wept because the restoration was far behind the original in glory, I rejoiced; for, finding that I could not afford to have the structure in deal, I had it built of marble, and the cost worked out most satisfactorily. In marble it cost me about a fourth of the estimate in deal!

I did it on the system adopted by the makers of the Basilica of St. Mark at Venice. Those economical people built their walls of brick and laid their marbles upon that. My collection of marbles was distinctly inferior to theirs, but I flatter myself that it was come by more honestly. The only piece of which I felt doubtful, not as regards beauty, but respecting the honourable nature of its original acquiring, was a fine slab, with many inlays. It was given to Augustus J. C. Hare by the Commander of one of the British transports that returned from the Black Sea and the Crimea in 1855, and it was originally in a church near Balaclava. In the catalogue of the sale of Mr. Hare's effects at Hurstmonceaux, the name of the British officer was given and the name of his ship and the name of the church, but the rest is silence. I cannot believe that that British officer would have been guilty of sacrilege; but I do not know how many hands a thing like this should pass through in order to lose the stain of sacrilege, so I don't worry over the question of the morality of the transaction, any more than the devout worshippers do beneath the mosaics of St. Mark—that greatest depository of stolen goods in the world.

All the rest of my coloured marbles that I applied to the brickwork of my little structure came mostly from old mantelpieces and restaurant tables, but I was lucky enough to alight upon quite a large number of white Sicilian tiles, more than an inch thick, which were invaluable to me, and a friendly stonemason gave me several yards of statuary moulding: it must have cost originally about what I paid for my entire building.

It was a great pleasure to me to watch the fabric arise, which it did like the towers of Ilium, to music —the music of the thrushes and blackbirds and robins of our English landscape in the early summer when I began my operations—they lasted just on a fortnight—and the splendid colour-chorus of the borders.

But what is a Temple on a hill without steps? and what are steps without piers, and what are piers without vases?

All came in due time. I found an excellent quarry not too far away, and from it I got several tons of stone that was easily shaped and squared, and there is very little art needed to deal efficiently with such monoliths as I had laid on the slope of the mound—the work occupied a man and his boy just three days. The source of the piers is my secret; but there they are with their stone vases to-day, and now from the marble seat of the temple, thickly overspread with cushions, one can overlook the parterres between the mound and the house, and feel no need for the sunk garden which is the ambition of such as must be on the crest of the latest wave of fashion.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH

'Atheist Friswell has been wondering where he saw a mount like mine crowned with just such a structure, and he has at last shepherded his wandering memory to the place. I ventured to suggest the possibilities of the island Scios, and Jack Heywood, the painter, who, though our neighbour, still remains our friend, makes some noncompromising remark about Milos "where the statues come from."

"I think you'll find the place in a picture-book called *Beauty Spots in Greece,*" remarked Mrs. Friswell. Dorothy is under the impression that Friswell's researches in the classical lore of one Lemprière is accountable for his notion that there is, or was, at one time in the world a Temple with some resemblance to the one in which we were sitting when he began to wonder.

"Very likely," said he, with a brutal laugh. "The temples on the hills were sometimes dedicated to the sun—Helios, you know."

Of course we all knew, or pretended that we knew.

"And what did your artful Christians do when they came upon such a fane?" he inquired.

"Pulled it down, I suppose; the early artful Christians had no more sense of architectural or antiquarian

beauty than the modern exponents of the cult," said Heywood.

"They were too artful for that, those early Christian propagandists," said Friswell. "No, they turned to the noble Greek worshippers whom they were anxious to convert, and cried, dropping their aspirates after the manner of the moderns, "dedicated to Elias, is it? Quite so—Saint Elias—he is one of our saints." That is how it comes that so many churches on hills in the Near East have for their patron Saint Elias. Who was he, I should like to know."

"I would do my best to withhold the knowledge from you," said Dorothy. "But was there ever really such a saint? There was a prophet, of course, but that's not just the same."

"I should think not," said Friswell. "The old prophets were the grandest characters of which there is a record—your saints are white trash alongside them—half-breeds. They only came into existence because of the craving of humanity for pluralities of worship. The Church has found in her saints the equivalents to the whole Roman theology."

"Mythology," said I correctively.

"There's no difference between the words," he replied.

"Oh, yes, my dear, there is," said his wife. "There is the same difference between theology and mythology as there is between convert and pervert."

"Exactly the same difference," he cried. "Exactly, but no greater. Christian hagiology—

what a horrid word!—is on all-fours with Roman mythology. The women who used to lay flowers in the Temple of Diana bring their lilies into the chapel of the Madonna. There are chapels for all the saints, for they have endowed their saints with the powers attributed to their numerous deities by the Greeks and the Romans. There are enough saints to go round—to meet all the requirements of the most freakish and exacting of district visitors. But the Jewish prophets were very different from the mystical and mythical saints. They lived, and you feel when you get in touch with them that you are on a higher plane altogether."

"Have you found out where you saw that Temple on the mound over there, and if you have, let us know the name of the god or the goddess or saint or saintess that it was dedicated to, and I'll try to pick up a Britannia metal figure cheap to put in the grove alongside the Greek vase," said I.

He seemed in labour of thought: no one spoke for fear of interrupting the course of nature.

"Let me think," he muttered. "I don't see why the mischief I should associate a Greek Temple with Oxford Street, but I do—that particular Temple of yours."

"If you were a really religious business man you might be led to think of the City Temple, only it doesn't belong to the Greek Church," remarked Heywood.

"Let me help you," said the Atheist's wife; "think of Truslove and Hanson, the booksellers. Did Arthur

Rackham ever put a Temple into one of his picture-books?"

"After all, you may have gone on to Holborn—Were you in Batsford's?" suggested Dorothy.

"Don't bother about him," said I. "What does it matter if he did once see something like our Temple; he'll never see anything like it again, unless——"

"It may have been Buszards'—a masterpiece of Buszards,—pure confectioners' Greek architecture—icing veined to look like marble," said Dorothy.

"I have it—I knew I could worry it out if you gave me time," cried Friswell.

"Which we did," said I. "Well, whisper it gently in our ears."

"It was in a scene in a play at the Princess's Theatre," he cried triumphantly. "Yes, I recollect it distinctly—something just like your masterpiece, only more slavishly Greek—the scene was laid in Rome, so they would be sure to have it correct."

"What play was it?" Dorothy asked.

"Oh, now you're asking too much," he replied. "Who could remember the name of a play after thirty or forty years? All that I remember is that it was a thoroughly bad play with a Temple like yours in it. It was the fading of the light that brought it within the tentacles of my memory."

"So like a man—to blame the dusk," said his wife.

"The twilight is the time for a garden—the summer twilight, like this," said Mr. Heywood.

"The moonless midnight is the time for some

gardens," said Dorothy, who is fastidious in many matters, though she did marry me.

"The time for a garden was decided a long time ago," said I—"as long ago as the third chapter of Genesis and the eighth verse: 'They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day.'"

"You say that with a last-word air—as much as to say 'what's good enough for God is good enough for me,'" laughed Friswell.

"I think that if ever a mortal heard the voice of God it would be in a garden at the cool of the day," said Mrs. Friswell gently.

"There are some people who would fail to hear it at any time," said I, pointedly referring to Friswell. He gave a laugh. "What are you guffawing at?" I cried with some asperity I trust.

"Not at your Congregational platitudes," he replied. "I was led to smile when I remembered how the colloquial Bible which was compiled by a Scotsman, treated that beautiful passage. He paraphrased it, 'The Lord went oot in the gloamin' to hae a crack wi' Adam ower the garden gate.'"

"I don't suppose he was thought irreverent," said Dorothy. "He wasn't really, you know."

"To take a step or two in the other direction," said Mrs. Friswell; "I wonder if Milton had in his mind any of the Italian gardens he must have visited on his travels when he described the Garden of Eden."

"There's not much of an Italian garden in Milton's Eden," said Dorothy, who is something of an author-

ity on these points. "But it is certainly an Italian twilight that he describes in one place. Poor Milton! he must have been living for many years in a perpetual twilight before it darkened into his perpetual night."

"You notice the influence of the hour," said Heywood. "We have fallen into a twilight-shaded vale of converse. This is the hour when people talk in whispers in gardens like these."

"I dare say we have all done so in our time," remarked some one with a sentimental sigh that she tried in vain to smother.

"Ah, God knew what He was about when He put a man and a woman into a garden alone, and gave them an admonition," said Friswell. "By the way, one of the most remarkable bits of testimony to the scientific accuracy of the Book of Genesis, seems to me to be the discovery, after many years of conjecture and vague theorising, that man and woman were originally one, so that the story of the formation of Eve by separating from Adam a portion of his body is scientifically true. I don't suppose that any of you good orthodox folk will take that in; but it is a fact all the same."

"I will believe anything except a scientific fact," said Dorothy.

"And I will believe nothing else," said Friswell. "The history of mankind begins with the creation of Eve—the separation of the two-sexed animal into two —meant a new world, a world worth writing about—a world of love."

"Listen to him—there's the effect of twilight in a Garden of Peace for you," said I. "Science and the Book of Genesis, hitherto at enmity, are at last reconciled by Atheist Friswell. What a triumph! What a pity that Milton, who made his Archangel visit Adam and his bride and give them a scientific lecture, did not live to learn all this!"

"He would have given us a Nonconformist account of it," said Mrs. Friswell. "I wonder how much his Archangel would have known if Milton had not first visited Charles Deodati."

There was much more to be said in the twilight on the subject of the world of love—a world which seems the beginning of a new world to those who love; and that was possibly why silence fell upon us and was only broken by the calling of a thrush from among the rhododendrons and the tapping of the rim of Heywood's empty pipe-bowl on the heel of his shoe. There was so much to be said, if we were the people to say it, on the subject of the new Earth which your lover knows to be the old Heaven, that, being aware of the inadequacy of human speech, we were silent for a long space.

And when we began to talk again it was only to hark back from Nature to the theatre, and, a further decadence still—the Gardens of the Stage.

The most effective garden scene in my recollection is that in which Irving and Ellen Terry acted when playing Wills' exquisite adaptation of *King René's Daughter,* which he called *Iolanthe.* I think it was Harker who painted it. The garden was outside a

mediæval castle, and the way its position on the summit of a hill was suggested was an admirable bit of stagecraft. Among the serried lines of pines there was at first seen the faint pink of a sunset, and this gradually became a glowing crimson which faded away into the rich blue of an Italian twilight. But there was enough light to glint here and there upon the armour of the men-at-arms who moved about among the trees.

The parterre in the foreground was full of red roses, and I remember that Mr. Ruskin, after seeing the piece and commenting upon the *mise-en-scène,* said that in such a light as was on it, the roses of the garden would have seemed black!

This one-act play was brought on by Irving during the latter months of the great run of *The Merchant of Venice.* It showed in how true a spirit of loyalty to Shakespeare the last act, which, in nearly all representations of the play, is omitted, on the assumption that with the disappearance of Shylock there is no further element of interest in the piece, was retained by the great manager. It was retained only for the first few months, and it was delightfully played. The moonlit garden in which the incomparable lines of the poet were spoken was of the true Italian type, though there is nothing in the text of what is called "local colour."

Juliet's garden on the same stage was not so definitely Italian as it might have been. But I happen to know who were Irving's advisers. Among them were two of the most popular of English painters,

and if they had had their own way Romeo would have been allowed no chance: he would have been hidden by the clumps of yew, and juniper, and oleander, and ilex, and pomegranate. A good many people who were present during the run of *Romeo and Juliet* were very much of the opinion that if this had taken place it would have been to the advantage of all concerned. Mr. Irving, as he was then, was not the ideal Romeo of the English playgoer. But neither was the original Romeo, who was, like the original Paolo, a man of something over forty.

I have never seen it pointed out that a Romeo of forty would be quite consistent with the Capulet tradition, for Juliet's father in the play was quite an elderly man, whereas the mother was a young woman of twenty-eight. As for Juliet's age, it is usually made the subject of a note of comment to the effect that in the warm south a girl matures so rapidly that she is marriageable at Juliet's age of thirteen, whereas in the colder clime of England it would be ridiculous to talk of one marrying at such an age.

There can be no doubt that in these less spacious days the idea of a bride of thirteen would not commend itself to parents or guardians, but in the sixteenth century, twelve or thirteen was regarded as the right age for the marriage of a girl. If she reached her sixteenth birthday remaining single, she was ready to join in the wail of Jephtha's Daughter. In a recently published letter written by Queen Elizabeth, who, by the way, although fully qualified to take part in that chorale, seemed to find a series of diplo-

matic flirtations to be more satisfying than matrimony, she submitted the names of three heiresses as ripe for marriage, and none of them had passed the age of thirteen. The Reverend John Knox made his third matrimonial venture with a child of fifteen. Indeed, one has only to search the records of any family of the sixteenth or seventeenth century to be made aware of the fact that Shakespeare's Juliet was not an exceptionally youthful bride. In Tenbury Church there is a memorial of "Ioyse, d. of Thos. Actone of Sutton, Esquire." She was the wife of Sir Thomas Lucy, whom she married at the age of twelve. If any actor, however, were to appear as a forty-two year Romeo and with a Juliet of thirteen, and a lady-mother of twenty-eight, he would be optimistic indeed if he should hope for a long run for his venture.

Of course with the boy Juliets of the Globe Theatre, the younger they were the better chance they would have of carrying conviction with them. A Juliet with a valanced cheek would not be nice, even though she were "nearer heaven by the attitude of a chopine" than one whose face was smooth.

I think that Irving looked his full age when he took it upon him to play Romeo; but to my mind he made a more romantic figure than most Romeos whom I have seen. But every one who joined in criticising the representation seemed unable to see more of him than his legs, and these were certainly fantastic. I maintained that such people began at the wrong end of the actor: they should have begun at the head. And this was the hope of Irving himself. He had the

intellect, and I thought his legs extremely intellectual.

I wonder he did not do some padding to bring his calves into the market, and make—as he would have done—a handsome profit out of the play. In the old days of the Bateman Management of the Lyceum, he was never permitted to ignore the possibilities of making up for deficiencies of Nature. In the estimation of the majority of theatre-goers, the intellect of an actor will never make up for any neglect of the adventitious aid of " make-up." When *Eugene Aram* was to be produced, it was thought advisable to do some padding to make Irving presentable. There was a clever expert at this form of expansion connected with the theatre; he was an Italian and, speaking no English, he was forced into an experiment in explanation in his own language. He wished to enforce the need for a solid shape to fit the body, rather than a patchwork of padding. In doing so he had to made constant use of the word *corpo,* and as none of his hearers understood Italian, they thought that he was giving a name to the contrivance he had in his mind; so when the thing passed out of the mental stage into the actor's dressing-room, it was alluded to as the corpo. The name seemed a happy one and it had a certain philological justification; for several people, including the dresser, thought that corpo was a contraction for corporation, and in the slang of the day, that meant an expansion of the chest a little lower down.

Mrs. Bateman, with whom and with whose family

I was intimate, told me this long after the event, and, curiously enough, it arose out of a conversation going on among some visitors to the house in Ensleigh Street where Mrs. Bateman and her daughters were living. I said I thought the most expressive line ever written was that in the *Inferno* which ended the exquisite Francesca episode:—

"E caddi come un corpo morto cade."

Mrs. Bateman and her daughter Kate (Mrs. Crowe) looked at each other and smiled. I thought that they had probably had the line quoted to them *ad nauseam,* and I said so.

"That is not what we were smiling at," said Mrs. Bateman. "It was at the recollection of the word *corpo.*"

And then she told me the foregoing.

Only a short time afterwards in the same house she gave me a bit of information of a much more interesting sort.

I had been at the first performance of Wills' play *Ninon* at the Adelphi theatre, and was praising the acting of Miss Wallis and Mr. Fernandez. When I was describing one scene, Mrs. Bateman said,—

"I recollect that scene very well; Mr. Wills read that play to us when he was writing *Charles I.;* but there was no part in it strong enough for Mr. Irving. He heard it read, however, and was greatly taken with some lines in it—so greatly in fact that Mr. Wills found a place for them in *Charles I.* They are the

lines of the King's upbraiding of the Scotch traitor, beginning, 'I saw a picture of a Judas once.' Some people thought them among the finest in the play."

I said that I was certainly among them.

That was how they made up a play which is certainly one of the most finished dramas in verse of the latter half of the nineteenth century.

It was Irving himself who told me something more about the same play. The subject had been suggested to Wills and he set about it with great fervour. He brought the first act to the Lyceum conclave. It opened in the banqueting hall of some castle, with a score of the usual cavaliers having the customary carouse, throwing about wooden goblets, and tossing off bumpers between the verses of some stirring songs of the type of "Oh, fill me a beaker as deep as you please," leading up to the unavoidable brawl and the timely entrance of the King.

"It was exactly the opposite to all that I had in my mind," Irving told me, "and I would have nothing to do with it. I wanted the domestic Charles, with his wife and children around him, and I would have nothing else."

Happily he had his own way, and with the help of the fine lines transferred from *Ninon,* the play was received with acclamation, and, finely acted as it is now by Mr. H. B. Irving and his wife, it never fails to move an audience.

I think it was John Clayton who was the original Oliver Cromwell. I was told that his make-up was one of the most realistic ever seen. He was Cromwell

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—to the wart! Some one who came upon him in his dressing-room was lost in admiration of the perfection of the picture, and declared that the painter should sign it in the corner, "John Clayton, pinx." But perhaps the actor and artist was Swinburne.

Only one more word in the Bateman connection. The varying fortunes of the family are well known—how the Bateman children made a marvellous success for a time—how the eldest, Kate, played for months and years in *Leah,* filling the treasury of every theatre in England and America—how when the Lyceum was at the point of closing its odors, *The Bells* rang in an era of prosperity for all concerned; but I don't suppose that many people know that Mrs. Bateman, the wife of "The Colonel," was the author of several novels which she wrote for newspapers at one of the "downs" that preceded the "ups" in her life.

And Compton Mackenzie is Mrs. Bateman's grandson!

And Fay Compton is Compton Mackenzie's youngest sister.

There is heredity for you.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH

It was melancholy—but Atheist Friswell alone was to blame for it—that we should sit out through that lovely evening and talk about tawdry theatricals, and that same tawdriness more than a little musty through time. If Friswell had not begun with his nonsense about having seen my Temple somewhere down Oxford Street we should never have wandered from the subject of gardens until we lost ourselves among the wings of the Lyceum and its "profiles" of its pines in *Iolanthe,* and its "built" yews and pomegranates in *Romeo and Juliet.* But among the perfume of the roses surrounding us, with an occasional whiff of the lavender mound and a gracious breath like that of

> "The sweet South
> That breathes upon a bank of violets
> Giving and taking odours,"

we continued talking of theatres until the summer night was reeking with the smell of sawdust and oranges, to say nothing of the fragrance of the *poudre de ninon* of the stalls, wafted over opera wraps and diamond-studded shirt-fronts—diamond studs, when just over the glimmering marble of my temple the Evening Star was glowing!

But what had always been a mystery to Friswell as the extraordinary lack of judgment on Irving's part in choosing his plays. Had he ever made a success since he produced that adaptation of *Faust?*

Beautifully staged and with some splendid moments due to the genius of the man himself and the never-failing charm of the actress with whom he was associated in all, yet no play worth remembering was produced at the Lyceum during that management. *Faust* made money, as it always has since the days of Marlowe; but all those noisy scenes and meaningless moments on the misty mountains—only alliteration's artful aid can deal adequately with such digressions from the story of Faust and Gretchen which was all that theatregoers, even of the better class, who go to the pit, wanted—seemed dragged into the piece without reason or profit. To be sure, pages and pages of Goethe's *Faust* are devoted to his attempt to give concreteness to abstractions. (That was Friswell's phrase; and I repeat it for what it is worth). But in the original all these have a meaning at the back of them; but Irving only brought them on to abandon them after a line or two. The hope to gain the atmosphere of the weird by means of a panorama of clouds and mountain peaks may have been realised so far as some sections of the audience were concerned; but such a manager as Henry Irving should have been above trying for such cheap effects.

Faust made money, however, and helped materially to promote the formation of the Company through which country clergymen and daily governesses in

the provinces hoped to advance the British Drama and earn 20 per cent. dividends.

I was at the first night of every play produced at the Lyceum for over twenty years, and I knew that Irving never fell short of the highest and the truest possible conception of any part that he attempted. At his best he was unapproachable. It was not the actor who failed, when there was failure; it was the play that failed. Only one marvellously inartistic feature was in the adaptation of *The Courier of Lyons.* He assumed that the sole way by which identification of a man is possible is by his appearance —that the intonation of his voice counts for nothing whatsoever. He acted in the dual rôle of Dubosc and Lesurges—the one a gentle creature with a gentle voice, the other a truculent ruffian who jerked out his words hoarsely—the very antithesis to the mild gentleman in voice, in gait, and in general demeanour, though closely resembling him in features and appearance. The impression given by this representation was that any one who, having heard Dubosc speak, would mistake Lesurges for him must be either stone-deaf or an idiot. But each of the parts was finely played; and the real old stage-coach arriving with its team smoking like Sheffield, helped to make a commonplace melodrama interesting.

Personally I do not think that he was justified in trying to realise at the close of the trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice,* the tableau of Christ standing mute and patient among the mockers. It was an attempt to obtain by suggestion some pity and sym-

pathy for an infamous and inhuman scoundrel. In that pictorial moment Shylock the Jew was made to pose as Christ the Jew.

Mrs. Friswell had not seen Irving's Shylock, but she expressed her belief that Shylock was on the whole very badly treated; and Dorothy was ready to affirm that Antonio was lacking in those elements that go to the composition of a sportsman. He should not have wriggled out of his bargain by the chicanery of the law.

"They were a bad lot, and that's a fact," I ventured to say.

"They were," acquiesced Friswell. "And if you look into the history of the Jews, they were also a bad lot; but among them were the most splendid men recorded as belonging to any race ever known on this earth; and I'm not sure that Irving wasn't justified in trying to get his audiences to realise in that last moment something of the dignity of the Hebrew people."

"He would have made a more distinct advance in that direction if he had cut out the 'business' of stropping his knife a few minutes earlier, 'To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there,'" I remarked.

"If he had done that Shakespeare would not have had the chance of his pun—the cheapest pun in literature—and it would not be like the author to have neglected that," said Mrs. Friswell.

They all seemed to know more of the play than I gave them credit for knowing.

It was Heywood who inquired if I remembered

another of Irving's plays at the close of which a second greatly misjudged character had appealed for sympathy by adopting the same pose.

Of course I did—I remembered it very distinctly. It was in *Peter the Great,* that the actor, waiting with sublime resignation to hear the heart-rending death-shriek of his son whom he had condemned to drink a cup of cold poison, is told by a hurrying messenger that his illegitimate child has just died—then came the hideous shriek, and the actor, with his far-away look of patient anguish, spoke his words,—

"Then I am childless!"

And the curtain fell.

He appealed for sympathy on precisely the same grounds as were suggested by the prisoner at the bar who had killed his father with a hatchet, and on being convicted by the jury and asked by the judge if he could advance any plea whereby the sentence of death should not be pronounced upon him, said he hoped that his lordship would not forget that he was an orphan.

In this drama the first act was played with as much jingling of sleigh-bells as took place in another and rather better known piece in the repertoire of the same actor.

But whatever were its shortcomings, *Peter the Great* showed that poor Lawrence Irving could write, and write well, and that he might one day give to the English theatre a great drama.

Irving was accused of neglecting English authors; but the accusation was quite unjust. He gave several

of them a chance. There was, of course, W. G. Wills, who was a true dramatist, and showed it in those plays to which I have referred. But it must not be forgotten that he produced a play by Mr. H. D. Traill and Mr. Robert Hitchens, and another by Herman Merrivale; Mr. J. Comyns Carr took in hand the finishing of *King Arthur,* begun by Wills, and made it ridiculous, and helped in translating and adapting *Madame Sans Gêne.* Might not Lord Tennyson also be called an English author? and were not his three plays, *Queen Mary, The Cup,* and *Becket* brought out at the Lyceum? Irving showed me how he had made the last-named playable, and I confess that I was astonished. There was not a single page of the book remaining untouched when he had done with it. Speech after speech was transferred from one act to another, and the sequence of the scenes was altered, before the drama was made possible. But when he had finished with it *Becket* was not only possible and playable, it was the noblest and the best constructed drama in verse that the stage had seen for years.

I asked him what Lord Tennyson had said about this chopping and changing; but he did not give me a verbatim account of the poet's greeting of his offspring in its stage dress—he only smiled as one smiles under the influence of a reminiscence of something that is better over.

When he went to Victorien Sardou for a new play and got *Robespierre,* Irving got the worst thing that he had produced up to that date; but when he went a second time and got *Dante,* he got something worse

still. Sir Arthur Pinero's letter acknowledging the debt incurred by the dramatists of England to M. Sardou for showing them how a play should be written was a masterpiece of irony.

The truth is that Irving was the greatest of English actors, and he was at his best only when he was interpreting the best. When he was acting Shakespeare he was supreme. In scenes of passion he differed from most actors. They could show a passion in the hands of a man, he showed the man in the hands of a passion. And what actor could have represented Corporal Brewster in *Waterloo* as Irving did?

About the changes that we veterans have seen in the stage during the forty years of our playgoing, we agree that one of the most remarkable is the introduction of parsons and pyjamas, and of persons with a past. All these glories of the modern theatre were shut out from the theatres of forty years ago. When an adaptation of *Dora* by the author of *Fedora* and *Theodora* was made for the English stage under the name of *Diplomacy,* the claim that the Countess with a past had upon the Diplomatist who is going to marry—really marry—another woman, was turned into a claim that she had " nursed him through a long illness." The censor of those days thought that that was quite as far as any one should go in that direction. It was assumed that *La Dame aux Camélias* could never be adapted without being offensive to a pure-minded English audience. I think that *A Clerical Error* was the first play in which a clergyman of the Church of England was given the entrée to a

theatre in London. To be sure, there were priests of the Church of Rome in Dion Boucicault's Irish plays, but they were not supposed to count. I heard that Mr. Pigott, the Censor, only passed the parson in *A Clerical Error* on the plea of the young nurse for something equally forbidden, in *Midshipman Easy*, that "it was a very little one." But from that day until now we have had parsons by the score, ladies wearing camellias and little else, by the hundred. As for the pyjama drama, I don't suppose that any manager would so much as read a play that had not this duplex garment in one scene. I will confess that I once wrote a story for *Punch* with a pyjama chorus in it. If it was from this indiscretion that a manager conceived the idea of a ballet founded on the same costume I have something to answer for.

But in journalism and literature a corresponding change has come about, only more recently. It is not more than ten or twelve years since certain words have enjoyed the liberty of the press. In a police-court case the word that the ruffian in the dock hurled at a policeman was represented thus—"d—n," telling him to go to "h——"; no respectable newspaper would ever put in the final letter.

But now we have had the highest examples of amalgamated newspapers printing the name of the place that was to be found in neither gazette nor gazetteer, in bold type at the head of a column, and that too in connection with the utterance of a Prime Minister. As for the d—n of ten years ago, no one could have believed that Bob Acres' thoughtless as-

sertion that "damns have had their day," should be so luridly disproved. Why, they have only now come into their inheritance. This is the day of the damn. It occupies the *Place aux Dames* of Victorian times; and now one need not hope to be able to pick up a paper or a book that has not most of its pages sprinkled with damns and hells as plentifully as a devil is sprinkled with cayenne. I am sure that in the cookery books of our parents the treatment of a devilled bone would not be found, or if the more conscientious admitted it, we should find it put, "how to cook a d—— bone," or, "another way," as the cookery book would put it more explicitly, "a d—d bone."

"It is satisfactory to learn that the Church which so long enjoyed the soul right to the property in these words, has relinquished its claim and handed over the title deeds of the freehold, with all the patronage that was supposed to go with it," said Friswell. "I read in the papers the other day that the Archbishop had received the report of the Committee he appointed to inquire into the rights of both words, and this recommended the abolition of both words in the interpretation accepted for them for centuries in religious communities; and in future damnation is to be taken to mean only something that does not commend itself to all temperaments, and hell is no more than a picturesque but insanitary dwelling."

"I read something like that the other day," said Dorothy. "But surely they have not gone so far as you say."

"They have gone to a much more voluminous

distance, I assure you," said he. "It is to enable us all to say the Athanasian Creed without our tongue in our cheek. Quicunque vult may repeat 'Quicunque Vult' with a full assurance that nothing worth talking about will happen."

"All the Bishops' Committees in the world cannot rob us Englishmen of our heritage in those words," I cried, feeling righteously angry at the man's flippancy. "If they were to take that from us, what can they give us in its place—tell me that?"

"Oh, there is still one word in the same connection that they have been afraid to touch," said he cheerfully. "Thank Heaven we have still got that to counteract any tendency of our language to become anæmic."

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH

I had been practically all my life enjoying gardens of various kinds, but I had given attention to their creations without giving a thought to their creation; I had taken the gifts of Flora, I would have said if I had been writing a hundred years ago, without studying the features or the figure of the goddess herself. If I were hard pressed for time and space I would say directly that I lived among flowers, but knew nothing of gardens. I had never troubled myself to inquire into the details of a garden's charm. I had watched gardeners working and idling, mowing and watering, tying up and cutting down, but I had never had a chance of watching a real gardener making a garden.

It is generally assumed that the first gardener that the world has known was Adam. A clergyman told me so with the smile that comes with the achievement of a satisfactory benefice—the indulgent smile of the higher criticism for the Book of Genesis. But people who agree with that assumption cannot have read the Book with the attention it deserves, or they would have seen that it was the Creator of all Who planted the first garden, and there are people alive to-day who are ready to affirm that He worked conscien-

tiously on the lines laid down by Le Notre. Most gardeners whom I have seen at work appeared to me to be well aware of the fact that the garden was given to man as a beatitude, and that agriculture came later and in the form of a Curse; and in accordance with this assurance they decline to labour in such a way as to make the terms of the Curse apply to themselves. If they wipe their brows with their shirt-sleeve, it is only because that is the traditional movement which precedes the consulting of their watch to see if that five minutes before the striking of the stable clock for the dinner hour will allow of their putting on their coats.

A friend of mine who had been reading Darwin and Wallace and Lyell and Huxley and the rest of them, greatly to the detriment of his interpretation of some passages in the Pentateuch, declared that the record of the incident of the Garden Designer in the first chapters of Genesis, being unable to do anything with his gardener and being obliged (making use of a Shakespearian idiom) to fire him out, showed such a knowledge of the trade, that, Darwin or no Darwin, he would accept the account of the transaction without reservation.

The saying that God sent food but the devil sent cooks may be adapted to horticulture, as a rule, I think; but it should certainly not be applied indiscriminately. The usual "jobber" is a man from whom employers expect a great deal but get very little that is satisfactory. That is because employers are unreasonable. The ordinary "working gar-

dener " does not think, because he is not paid to think: he does not get the wages of a man who is required to use his brain. When one discovers all that a gardener should know, and learns that the average wage of the trade is from one pound to thirty shillings a week, the unreasonableness of expecting a high order of intelligence to be placed at your service for such pay will be apparent.

Of course a " head " at an establishment where he is called a " curator " and has half a dozen assistants, gets a decent salary and fully earns it; but the pay of the greater number of the men who call themselves gardeners is low out of all proportion to what their qualifications should be.

Now this being so, is the improvement to come by increasing the wages of the usual type of garden jobber? I doubt it. My experience leads me to believe very strongly in the employer's being content with work only, and in his making no demand for brains or erudition from the man to whom he pays twenty-five shillings a week—pre-war rates, of course: the war-time equivalent would, of course, be something like £2 5s.—the brains and erudition should be provided by himself. The employer or some member of his family should undertake the direction of the work and ask for the work only from the man.

I know that the war days were the means of developing this system beyond all that one thought possible five or six years ago; and of one thing I am sure, and this is that no one who has been compelled to " take up " his own garden will ever go back to the

old way, the leading note of which was the morning grumble at the inefficiency of the gardener, and the evening resolution to fire him out. The distinction between exercise and work has, within the past few fateful years, been obliterated; and it has become accepted generally that to sweat over the handle of a lawnmower is just as ennobling as to perspire for over after over at a bowling crease; and that the man who comes in earth-stained from his allotment, is not necessarily the social inferior of the man who carries away on his knees a sample of the soil of the football field. There may be a distinction between the work and the play; but it is pretty much the same as the difference between the Biblical verb to sweat and the boudoir word to perspire. The pores are opened by the one just as healthfully as by the other. And in future I am pretty sure that we shall all sweat and rarely perspire.

I need not give any of the "instances" that have come under my notice of great advantage accruing to the garden as well as to the one who gardens without an indifferent understudy—every one who reads this book is in a position to supply such an omission. I am sure that there is no country town or village that cannot mention the name of some family, a member or several members of which have been hard at work raising flowers or vegetables or growing fruit, with immediately satisfactory results, and a prospect of something greatly in advance in the future.

I am only in a position to speak definitely on be-

half of the working proprietor, but I am certain that the daughters of the house who have been working so marvellously for the first time in their lives, at the turning out of munitions, taking the place of men in fields and byres, and doing active duties in connection with hospitals, huts, and canteens, will not now be content to go back to their tennis and teas and "districts" as before. They will find their souls in other and more profitable directions, and it is pretty certain that the production of food will occupy a large number of the emancipated ones. We shall have vegetables and fruit and eggs in such abundance as was never dreamt of four years ago. Why, already potato crops of twelve tons to the acre are quite common, whereas an aggregate of eight and nine tons was considered very good in 1912. We all know the improvement that has been brought about in regard to poultry, in spite of the weathercockerel admonition of the Department of the Government, which one month sent out a million circulars imploring all sorts and conditions of people to keep poultry, and backed this up with a second million advising the immediate slaughter of all fowls who had a fancy for cereals as a food; the others were to be fed on the crumbs that fell from the master's table, but if the master were known to give the crumbs to birds instead of eating them himself or making them into those poultices, recommended by another Department that called them puddings, he would be prosecuted. Later on we were to be provided with a certain amount of stuff for pure bred fowls, in order that only the purest and

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best strains should be kept; but no provision in the way of provisions was made for the cockerels! The cockerels were to be discouraged, but the breeding of pure fowls was to be encouraged!

It took another million or so of buff Orpington circulars to explain just what was meant by the Department, and even then it needed a highly-trained intelligence to explain the explanation.

When we get rid of these clogs to industry known as Departments, we shall, I am sure, all work together to the common good, in making England a self-supporting country, and the men and women of England a self-respecting people, and in point of health an A 1 people instead of the C 3 into which we are settling down complacently. The statistics of the grades recently published appeared to me to be the greatest cause for alarm that England has known for years. And the worst of the matter is that when one asks if a more ample proof of decadence has ever been revealed, people smile and inquire if the result of the recent visits of the British to France and Italy and Palestine and Mesopotamia suggest any evidence of decadence. They forget that it was only the A classes that left England; only the A classes were killed or maimed; the lower grades remained at home with their wives in order that the decadent breed might be carried on with emphasised decadence.

If I were asked in what direction one should look for the salvation of the race from the rush into Avernus toward which we have been descending, I would certainly say,—

"The garden and the allotment only will arrest our feet on the downward path."

If the people of England can throw off the yoke of the Cinema and take to the spade it may not yet be too late to rescue them from the abyss toward which they are sliding.

And it is not merely the sons who must be saved, the daughters must be taken into account in this direction; and when I meet daily the scores of trim and shapely girls with busts of Venus and buskins of Diana, walking—*vera incessu patuit dea*—as if the land belonged to them—which it does—I feel no uneasiness with regard to the women with whom England's future rests. If they belong to the land, assuredly the land belongs to them.

But the garden and not the field is the place for our girls. We know what the women are like in those countries where they work in the fields doing men's work. We have seen them in Jean François Millet's pictures, and we turn from them with tears.

> "Women with labour-loosened knees
> And gaunt backs bowed with servitude."

We do not wish to see them in England. I have seen them in Italy, in Switzerland, and on the Boer farms in South Africa. I do not want to see them in England.

Agriculture is for men, horticulture for women. A woman is in her right place in a garden. A garden looks lovelier for her presence. What an incongruous object a jobbing gardener in his shirt-sleeves and

filthy cap seems when seen against a background of flowers! I have kept out of my garden for days in dread of coming upon the figure which I knew was lurking there, spending his time looking out for me and working feverishly when he thought I was coming.

But how pleasantly at home a girl in her garden garb appears, whether on the rungs of a ladder tying up the roses, or doing some thinning out on a too rampant border! There should be no work in a garden beyond her powers—that is, of course, in a one-gardener garden—a one-greenhouse garden. She has no business trying to carry a tub with a shrub weighing one hundred and fifty pounds from one place to another; but she can wheel a brewer's or a coalman's sack barrow with two nine-inch wheels with two hundredweight resting on it for half a mile without feeling weary. No garden should be without such a vehicle. One that I bought ten years ago from a general dealer has enabled me to superannuate the cumbersome wheelbarrow. You require to lift the tub into the wheelbarrow, but the other does the lifting when you push the iron guard four inches under the staves at the bottom. As for that supposed bugbear—the carting of manure, it should not exist in a modern garden. A five-shilling tin of fertiliser and a few sacks of Wakeley's hop mixture will be enough for the borders of a garden of an acre, unless you aim at growing everything to an abnormal size. But you must know what sort of fertilising every bed requires.

I mention these facts because we read constantly

of the carting of manure being beyond the limits of a girl-gardener's strength, to say nothing of the distasteful character of the job. The time is coming when there will be none of the old-fashioned stable-sweepings either for the garden or the field, and I think we shall get on very well without it, unless we wish to grow mushrooms.

The only other really horrid job that I would not have my girl face is pot-washing. This is usually a winter job, because, we are told, summer is too busy a time in the garden to allow of its being done except when the ice has to be broken in the cistern and no other work is possible. But why should the pots be washed out of doors and in cold water? If you have a girl-gardener, why should you not give her the freedom of the scullery sink where the hot water is laid on? There is no hardship in washing a couple of hundred pots in hot water and in a warm scullery on the most inclement day in January.

The truth is that there exists a garden tradition, and it originated with men who had neither imagination nor brains, and people would have us believe that it must be maintained—that frogs and toads should be slain and that gardener is a proper noun of the masculine gender—that manure must be filthy and that a garden should never look otherwise than unfinished at any time of the year—that radiation is the same as frost, and that watering should be done regularly and without reference to the needs of the individual plants.

Lady Wolseley has done a great deal toward giv-

ing girls the freedom of the garden. She has a small training ground on the motor road between Lewes and Eastbourne. Of course it is not large enough to pay its way, and I am told that in order to realise something on the produce, the pony cart of a costermonger in charge of two of the young women goes into Lewes laden with vegetables for sale. I have no doubt that the vegetables are of the highest grade, but I am afraid that if it becomes understood that the pupils are to be trained in the arts of costermongery the prestige of her college, as it has very properly been called by Lady Wolseley, will suffer.

What I cannot understand is why, with so admirable a work being done at that place, it should not be subsidised by the State. It may be, however, that Lady Wolseley has had such experience of the way in which the State authorities mismanage almost everything they handle, as prevents her from moving in this direction. The waste, the incompetence, and the arrogance of all the Departments that sprang into existence with the war are inconceivable. I dare say that Lady Wolseley has seen enough during the past four years to convince her that if once the "State" had a chance of putting a controlling finger upon one of the reins of the college pony it would upset the whole apple-cart. The future of so valuable an institution should not be jeopardised by the intrusion of the fatal finger of a Government Department. The Glynde College should be the Norland Institution of the nursery of Flora.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH

It was when a gardener with whom I had never exchanged a cross word during the two years he was with me assured me that work was not work but slavery in my garden—he had one man under him and appealed to me for a second—that I made my apology to him and allowed him to take unlimited leave of me and his shackles. He had been with me for over two years, and during all this time the garden had been going from bad to worse. At the end of his bondage it was absolutely deplorable. At no time had we the courage to ask any visitor to walk round the grounds.

And yet the man knew the Latin name of every plant and every flower from the cedar on the lawn to the snapdragon—he called it antirrhinum—upon the wall; but if he had remained with me much longer there would have been nothing left for him to give a name to, Latin or English.

I took over the garden and got in a boy to do the pot-washing at six shillings a week, and a fortnight later I doubled his wages, so vast a change, or rather, a promise of change, as was shown by the place. Within a month I was paying him fifteen shillings, and within six months, eighteen. He was an excellent

lad, and in due time his industry was rewarded by the hand of our cook. I parted with him reluctantly at the outbreak of the war, though owing to physical defects he was never called up.

It was when I was thrown on my own resources after the strain of leave-taking with my slave-driven professor that I acquired the secret of garden design which I have already revealed—namely, the multiplying of " features " within the garden space.

It took time for me to carry out my plans, for I was very far from seeing, as a proper garden designer would have done in a glance, how the ground lent itself to " features " in various directions; and it was only while I was working at one part that the possibilities of others suggested themselves to me. It was the incident of my picking up in a stonemason's yard for a few shillings a doorway with a shaped architrave, that made me think of shutting off the House Garden, which I had completed the previous year, from the rest. I got this work done quite satisfactorily by the aid of a simple balustrade on each side. Here there was an effective entrance to a new garden, where before nothing would grow owing to the overshadowing by the sycamores beyond my mound. My predecessor took refuge in a grove of euonyma, behind which he artfully concealed the stone steps leading to the Saxon terrace. This was one of the " features " of his day—the careful concealing of such drawbacks in the landscape as stone steps. But as I could not see that they were after all a fatal blot that should put an end to all hope to make anything

of the place, I pulled away the masses of euonyma, and turned the steps boldly round, adding piers at the foot.

Here then was at my command a space of forty feet square, walled in, and in the summer-shade of the high sycamores, and the winter-shade of a beautifully-shaped and immense deciduous oak. And what was I to do with it?

Before I left the interrogatory ground I saw with great clearness the reflection of the graceful foliage in a piece of water. That was just what was needed at the place, I was convinced—a properly puddled Sussex dew-pond such as Gilbert White's swallows could hardly resist making their winter quarters as the alternative to that long and tedious trip to South Africa. The spot was clearly designed by Nature as a basin. On three sides it had boundaries of sloping mounds, and I felt myself equal to the business of completing the circle so that the basin would be in its natural place.

I consulted my builder as to whether or not my plan was a rightly puddled one—which was a way of asking if it would hold water in a scientific as well as a metaphorical sense. He advised concrete, and concrete I ordered, though I was quite well aware of the fact that in doing so I must abandon all hopes of the swallows, for I knew that with concrete there would be none of that mud in the pond which the great naturalists had agreed was indispensable for the hibernating of the birds.

A round pond basin was made, about fifteen feet

A ROSE COLONNADE

in diameter, and admirably made too. In the centre I created an island with the nozzle of a single *jet d'eau,* carefully concealed, and by an extraordinary chance I discovered within an inch or two of the brim of the basin, the channel of an ancient scheme of drainage—it may have been a thousand years old—and this solved in a moment the problem of how to carry off the overflow. The water was easily available from the ordinary " Company's " pipe for the garden supply; so that all that remained for me to do was to tidy up the ground, which I did by getting six tons of soft reddish sandstone from a neighbouring quarry and piling it in irregular masses on two sectors of the circular space, taking care to arrange for a scheme of " pockets " for small plants at one part and for large ferns at another. The greatest elevation of this boundary was about fifteen feet, and here I put a noble cliff weighing a ton and a half, with several irregular steps at the base, the lowest being just above a series of stone rectangular basins, connected by irregular shallow channels in a descent to the big pond. Then I got a leaden pipe with an " elbow " attachment to the Company's water supply beneath, and contrived a sort of T-shaped spray which I concealed on the level of the top of my cliff, and within forty-eight hours I had a miniature cascade pouring over the cliff and splashing among the stone basins and their channels —*" per aver'pace coi seguaci sui "* —in the large pond below.

Of course it took a summer and a winter to give this little scheme a chance of assimilating with Nature;

but once it began to do so it did so thoroughly. The cliff and the rocky steps, which I had made in memory of the cascade at Platte Klip on the side of Table Mountain where I had often enjoyed a bath, became beautifully slimy, and primroses were blooming so as to hide the outlines of the rectangle, while Alpines and sedums and harts-tongue ferns found accommodation in the pockets among the stones. In the course of another year the place was covered with vegetation and the sandstones had become beautifully weathered, and sure enough, the boughs of the American oak had their Narcissus longings realised, but without the Narcissus sequel.

Here, then, was a second " feature " accomplished; and we walk out of the sunshine of the House Garden, and, passing through the carved stone doorway, find ourselves in complete shade with the sound of tinkling water in the air—when the taps are turned in the right direction; but in the matter of water we are economical, and the cascade ceased to flow while the war lasted.

I do not think that it is wrong to try to achieve such contrasts in designing a range of gardens. The effect is great and it will never appear to be cheap, provided that it is carried out naturally. I do not think that in a place of the character of that just described one should introduce such objects as shrubs in tubs, or clipped trees; nor should one tolerate the appearance for the sake, perhaps, of colour, of any plant or flower that might not be found in the natural scene on which it is founded. We all know that in

a rocky glen we need not look for brilliant colour, therefore the introduction of anything striking in this way would be a jarring note. To be sure I have seen the irrepressible scarlet geranium blazing through some glens in the island of St. Helena; but St. Helena is in the tropics, and a tropical glen is not the sort to which we have become accustomed in England. If one has lived at St. Helena for years and, on coming to England, wishes to be constantly reminded of the little island of glens and gorges and that immense "combe" where James Town nestles, beyond a doubt that strange person could not do better than create a garden of gullies with the indigenous geranium blazing out of every cranny. But I cannot imagine any one being so anxious to perpetuate a stay among the picturesque loneliness of the place. I think it extremely unlikely that if Napoleon I. had lived to return to France, he would have assimilated any portion of the gardens of Versailles with those that were under his windows at Longwood. I could more easily fancy his making an honest attempt to transform the ridge above Geranium Valley on which Longwood stands—if there is anything of that queer residence left by the white ants—the natural owners of the island—into a memory of the Grand Trianon, only for the "*maggior dolore*" that would have come to him had such an enterprise been successful.

My opinion is that a garden should be such as to cause a visitor to exclaim,—

"How natural!" rather than, "How queer!"

A lake may be artificial; but it will only appear so

if its location is artificial; and, therefore, in spite of the fact that there are countless mountain tarns in Scotland and Wales, it is safest for the lake to be made on the lowest part of your ground. I dare say that a scientific man without a conscience could, by an arrangement of forced draught apparatus, cause an artificial river to flow uphill instead of down; but though such a stream would be quite a pleasing incident of one of the soirées of the Royal Society at Burlington House, I am certain that it would look more curious than natural if carried out in an English garden ground. The artificial canals of the Dutch gardens and of those English gardens which were made to remind William III. of his native land, will look natural in proportion to their artificiality. This is not so hard a saying as it may seem; I mean to say that if the artificial canal apes a natural river, it will look unnatural. If it aims at being nothing but a Dutch canal, it will be a very interesting part of a garden—a Dutch garden—plan, and as such it will seem in the right and natural place. If a thing occupies a natural place—the place where you expect to find it—it must be criticised from the standpoint of its environment, so to speak, and not on the basis of the canons that have a general application.

And to my mind the difference between what is right and what is wrong in a garden is not the difference between what is the fashion and what is not the fashion; but between the appropriate and the inappropriate. A rectangular canal is quite right in a copy of the Dutch garden; but it would be quite

wrong within sight of the cascades of the Villa d'Este or any other Italian garden. Topiary work is quite right in a garden that is meant frankly to be a copy of one of the clipped shrubberies of the seventeenth and of the eighteenth century that preceded landscape treatment, but it is utterly out of place in a garden where flowers grow according to their own sweet will, as in a rosery or a herbaceous border. A large number of people dislike what Mr. Robinson calls "Vegetable Sculpture," and would not allow any example to have a place on their property; but although I think I might trust myself to resist every temptation to admit such an element into a garden of mine, I should not hesitate to make a feature of it if I wanted to be constantly reminded of a certain period of history. It would be as unjust to blame me on this account as it would be to blame Mr. Hugh Thomson for introducing topiary into one of his exquisite illustrations to Sir Roger de Coverley. I would, I know, take great pleasure in sitting for hours among the peacocks and bears and cocked hats of the topiary sculptor, because I should feel myself in the company of Sir Roger and Will Wimble, and I consider that they would be very good company indeed; but I admit that I should prefer that that particular garden was on some one else's property. I should spend a very pleasant twenty minutes in a neighbour's—a near neighbour's—reproduction of the grotto at Pope's Villa at Twickenham, not because I should be wanting in a legitimate abhorrence of the thing, but because I should be able to repeople it with several very

pleasant people—say, Arbuthnot, Garth, and Mr. Henry Labouchere. But heaven forbid that I should spend years of my life in the construction of a second Pope's grotto as one of the features of my all-too-constricted garden space.

One could easily write a book on "Illustrating Gardens," meaning not the art of reproducing illustrations of gardens, but the art of constructing gardens that would illustrate the lives of certain interesting people at certain interesting periods. The educational value of gardens formed with such an intent would be great, I am sure. I had occasion some time ago to act the part of their governess to my little girls, and to Dorothy's undisguised amazement I took the class into the garden, and not knowing how to begin—whether with an inquiry into the economic value of a thorough grounding in Conic Sections, or a consideration of the circumstances attending the death of Mary Queen of Scots—I have long believed that a modern coroner's jury would have found that the cause of death was blood poisoning, as there is no evidence that the fatal axe was aseptic, not having been boiled before using—I begged the girls to walk round with me.

"This is something quite new," said Rosamund—"lessons in a garden."

"Is it?" I asked. "Did Miss Pinkerton ever tell you about a man named Plato?"

It was generally admitted that if she had ever done so they would have remembered the name.

I saw at once that this was a chance that might not

occur again for me to recover my position. The respect that I have for Miss Pinkerton is almost equal to that I have for Lemprière or Dr. William Smith.

I unfolded like a philactery the stores of my knowledge on the subject of the garden of Academus, where Plato and his pupils were wont to meet and discover—

> "How charming is divine philosophy!
> Not harsh and crabbed as some fools affirm,
> But musical as is Apollo's lute,"

and the children learned for the first time the origin of the name Academy. They were struck powerfully with the idea, which they thought an excellent one, of the open-air class.

This was an honest attempt on my part to illustrate something through the medium of the garden; but Miss Pinkerton's methods differed from those of Plato: the blackboard was, in her opinion, the only medium of illustration for a properly organised class.

It was a daily delight to me when I lived in Kensington to believe that Addison must have walked through my garden when he had that cottage on the secluded Fulham Road, far away from the distracting noise and bustle of the town, and went to pay a visit to his wife at Holland Park. Some of the trees of that garden must have been planted even before Addison's day. There was a mighty mulberry-tree—a straggler from Melbury (once Mulbery) Road—and this was probably one of the thousands planted by King James when he became possessed of that

admirable idea of silk culture in England. Now, strange to say, I could picture to myself much more vividly the presence of Addison in that garden than I can the bustle of the old Castle's people within the walls which dominate my present ground. These people occupied the Castle from century to century. When they first entered into possession they wore the costume of the Conquest, and no doubt they honoured the decrees of fashion as they changed from year to year; but they faded away without leaving a record of any personality to absorb the attention of the centuries, and without such an individuality I find it impossible to realise the scene, except for an occasional hour when the moonlight bathes the tower of the ruined keep, and I fancy that I hear the iron tread of the warder going his rounds—I cannot plunge myself into the spacious days of plate armour. It is the one Great Man or the one Great Woman that enables us nowadays to realise his or her period, and our Castle has unhappily no ghost with a name, and one ghost with a name is more than an armed host of nonentities. There is a tradition—there is just a scrap of evidence to support it—that Dr. Samuel Johnson once visited a house in the High Street and ate cherries in the garden. Every time I have visited that house I have seen the lumbering Hogarthian hero intent upon his feast, and every time that I am in that garden I hear the sound of his "Why, sir——"

I complained bitterly to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle when he was with us in the tilt-yard garden, that we

had not even the shadow of a ghost—ghosts by the hundred, no doubt, but no real ghost of some one that did things.

"You will have to create one for yourself," he said.

"One must have bones and flesh and blood—plenty of blood, before one can create a ghost, as you well know," said I. "I have searched every available spot for a name associated with the place, but I have found nothing."

"Don't be in a hurry; he'll turn up some day when you're not expecting him," said my friend.

But I am still awaiting an entity connected with the Castle, and I swear, as did the young Lord Hamlet:—

"By Heaven! I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH

Our Garden of Peace is a Garden of Freedom—freedom of thought, freedom of converse. In it one may cultivate all the flora of illiteracy without rebuke, as well as the more delicate, but possibly less fragrant growths of literature, including those hybrids which I suppose must give great satisfaction to the cultivators. We assert our claim to talk about whatever we please; we will not submit to be told that anything is out of our reach as a subject: if we cannot reach the things that are so defined we can at least make an attempt to knock them down with a bamboo. Eventually we may even discourse of flowers; but if we do we certainly will not adopt the horticultural standard of worth, which is "of $\frac{\text{no}}{\text{some}}$ commercial value." A good many things well worthy of a strict avoidance in conversation possess great commercial value, and others that we hold very close to our hearts are of no more intrinsic value than a Victoria Cross. We have done and shall do our best, however, not to make use of the word culture, unless it be in connection with a disease. The lecturers on tropical diseases talk of their "cholera cultures" and their "yellow-fever cultures" and their "malaria cultures"; but we know that there is a more malignant growth than any

of these: it is spelt by its cultivators with the phonetic "K" and it has banished the word that begins with a "c" from the English language, unless, as I say, in referring to the development of a malady. That is where victory may be claimed by the vanquished: the beautiful word is banished for ever from the English literature in which it once occupied an exalted place.

It is because of the Freedom which we enjoy in this Garden of Peace of ours that I did not hesitate for a moment to quote Tennyson to Dorothy a few days ago, when we were chatting about Poets' Gardens, from the "garden inclosed" of the Song of Solomon—the most beautiful ever depicted—to that of *Maud*. It requires some courage to quote Tennyson beyond the limits of our own fireside in these days. The days when he was constantly quoted now seem as the days of Noë, before the Flood—the flood of the formless which we are assured is poetry nowadays. It is called "The New School." Some twenty-five or thirty years ago something straddled across our way through the world labelled "New Art." Its lines were founded upon those of the crushed cockroach, and it may have contributed to the advance of the temperance movement; for its tendency was certainly to cause any inebriate who found a specimen watching him wickedly from the mouth of a vase of imitation pewter on the mantel-shelf in a drawing-room, or in the form of a pendant in sealing-wax enamel on the neck of a young woman, to pull himself together and sign anything in reason in the direction of abstaining.

The new poetry is the illiterary equivalent of the old "New Art." It is flung in our faces with the effect of a promiscuous handful from the bargain counter of a draper's cheap sale—it is a whiz of odd lengths and queer colours, and has no form but plenty of flutter. Poetry may not be as a great critic said it was—form and form and nothing but form; but it certainly is not that amorphous stuff which is jerked into many pages just now. I have read pages of it in which the writers seem to have taken as a model of design one of the long dedications of the eighteenth century, or perhaps the "lettering" on the tombstone of the squire in a country church, or, most likely of all, the half column of "scare headings" in a Sunday newspaper in one of the Western States of America.

It may begin with a monosyllable, and be followed by an Alexandrine; then come a stuttering half-dozen unequal ribbon lengths, rather shop-soiled, and none of them riming; but suddenly we find the tenth line in rime with the initial monosyllable which you have forgotten. Then there may come three or four rimes and as many half-rimes—f-sharp instead of f—and then comes a bundle of prosaic lines with the mark of the scissors on their ragged endings; the ravellings are assumed to adorn the close as the fringes of long ago were supposed to give a high-class "finish" to the green rep upholstering of the drawing-room centre ottoman.

And yet alongside this sort of thing we pick up

many thin volumes of verse crowded with beauty of thought, of imagination, of passion.

And then what do we find given to us every week in *Punch* and several of the illustrated papers? Poem after poem of the most perfect form in rhythm and rimes—faultless double rimes and triple and quadruple syllables all ringing far more true than any in *Hudibras* or the *Ingoldsby Legends*. Sir Owen Seaman's verses surpass anything in the English language for originality both in phrase and thought, and Adrian Ross has shown himself the equal of Gilbert in construction. The editor of *Punch* has been especially happy in his curry-combing of the German ex-Kaiser; we do not forget that it was his poem on the same personage, which appeared in *The World* after the celebrated telegram to Krüger, that gave him his sure footing among the *élite* of satirical humour. The

"Pots———
Dam silly,"

was surely the most finished sting that ever came from the tail of what I venture to call "vespa-verse."

I remember how, when I came upon Barham's rime,—

"Because Mephistopheles
Had thrown in her face a whole cup of hot coffee-lees,"

I thought that the limits of the "triple-bob," as I should like to call it, had been reached. Years after-

wards I found myself in a fit of chuckling over Byron's

> "Tell us, ye husbands of wives intellectual,
> Now tell us truly, have they not hen-pecked you all?"

After another lapse I found among the carillon of Calverley,—

> "No, mine own, though early forced to leave you,
> Still my heart was there where first we met;
> In those 'Lodgings with an ample sea-view,'
> Which were, forty years ago, 'To Let.'"

The *Bab Ballads* are full of whimsical rimes; but put all these that I have named together and you will find that they are easily outjingled by Sir Owen Seaman. The first "copy of verses" in *Punch* any week is a masterpiece in its way, and assuredly some of his brethren of Bouverie Street are not very far behind him in the merry dance in which he sets the *pas*.

A good many years ago—I think it was shortly after the capitulation of Paris—there was a correspondence in *The Graphic* about the English words for which no rime could be found. One was "silver," the other "month." It was, I think, Burnand who contrived,—

> "Argentum, we know, is the Latin for silver,
> And the Latin for spring ever was and is still, ver."

But then purists shook their heads and said that Latin was not English, and the challenge was for English rimes.

As for "month," Mr. Swinburne did not hesitate to write a whole volume of exquisite poems to a child to bring in his rime for month: it was "millionth"; but the metre was so handled by the master that it would have been impossible for even the most casual reader to make the word a dissyllable. In the same volume he found a rime for babe in "astrolabe."

(With regard to my spelling of the word "rime," I may here remark that I have done so for years. I was gratified to find my lead followed in the *Cambridge History of English Literature.*)

And all this weedy harvest of criticism and reminiscence has come through my quoting Tennyson without an apology! All that I really had to say was that there is no maker of verses in England to-day who has the same mastery of metre as Tennyson had. It is indeed because of the delicacy of his ear for words that so many readers are disposed to think his verse artificial. But there are people who think that all art is artificial. (This is a very imminent subject for consideration in a garden, and it has been considered by great authorities in at least two books, to which I may refer if I go so far as to write something about a garden in these pages.) All that I will say about the art, the artifice, the artfulness, or the artificiality of the pictures that Tennyson brings before my eyes through his mastery of his medium, is that I have always placed a higher value upon the meticulous than upon the slap-dash in every form of art. It was said that the late Duke of Cambridge could detect a speck of rust on a sabre quicker than

any Commander-in-Chief that ever lived; but I do not therefore hold that he was a greater soldier than Marlborough. But if Marlborough could make the brightness of his sabres do the things that he meant them to do, his victories were all the more brilliant.

I dare say there are quite a number of people who think that Edmund Yates's doggerel about a brand of Champagne—it commences something like this, if my memory serves me:—

> "Dining with Bulteen
> Captain of Militia,
> Ne'er was dinner seen
> Soupier or fishyer——"

quite equal to the best that Calverley or Seaman ever wrote, because it has that slap-dash element about it that disregards correct rimes; but I am not among those critics. Tennyson does not usually paint an impressionist picture, though he can do so when he pleases; he is rather a pre-Raphaelite; but, however he works, he produces his picture and it is a picture. Talk of Art and Nature—there never was a poet who reproduced Nature with an art so consummate; there never was a poet who used his art so graphically. Of course I am now talking of Tennyson at his best, not of Tennyson of *The May Queen,* which is certainly deficient enough in art to please—as it has pleased—the despisers of the meticulous, but of Tennyson in his lyrical mood—of the garden-song in *Maud,* of the echo-song in *The Princess*—both diamonds, not in the rough, but cut into countless facets

—Tennyson in *The Passing of Arthur,* and countless pages of the *Idylls,* Tennyson of the pictorial simplicity of *Enoch Arden* and the full brush of *Ulysses, Tithonus, Lucretius,* the battle glow of *The Ballad of the Revenge,* the muted trumpet-notes of *The Defence of Lucknow.*

And yet through all are those lowering lines which somehow he would insist on introducing in the wrong places with infinite pains! It was as if he took the trouble to help us up a high marble staircase to the cupola of a tower, and to throw open before our eyes a splendid landscape, only to trip us up when we are lost in wonder of it all, and send us headlong to the dead earth below.

It was when we were looking down a gorge of tropical splendour in the island of Dominica in the West Indies opening a wide mouth to the Caribbean, that the incomparable lines from *Enoch Arden* came upon me in the flash of the crimson-and-blue wings of a bird—one of the many lories, I think it was—that fled about the wild masses of the brake of hibiscus, and I said them to Dorothy. Under our eyes was a tropical garden on each side of the valley —a riot of colour—a tropical sunset laid at our feet in the tints of a thousand flowers down to where the countless palms of the gorge began to mingle with the yuccas that swayed over the sea-cliffs in the blue distance.

> " The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
> The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd

And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail.
No sail from day to day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;
The blaze upon the waters to the east;
The blaze upon his island overhead;
The blaze upon the waters to the west;
Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail."

There was the most perfect picture of the tropical island.

Some months after we had returned to England I found the *Enoch Arden* volume lying on the floor at Dorothy's feet. She was roseate with indignation as I entered the room. I paused for an explanation.

It came. She touched the book with her foot—it was a symbolic spurn—as much as any one with a conscience could give to a royal-blue tooled morocco binding.

"How could he do it?" she cried.

"Do what?"

"Those two lines at the end. Listen to this"—she picked up the book with a sort of indignant snatch:—

"'There came so loud a calling of the sea
That all the houses in the haven rang.
He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad
Crying with a loud voice, "A sail! a sail!

I am saved," and so fell back and spoke no more.
So past the strong, heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.'

"Now tell me if I don't do well to be angry," cried Dorothy. "Those two lines—"a costlier funeral"! He should have given the items in the bill and said what was the name of the undertaker. Oh, why didn't you warn me off that awful conclusion? What should you say the bill came to? Oh, Alfred, Lord Tennyson!"

I shook my head sadly, of course.

"He does that sort of thing now and then," I said sadly. "You remember the young lady whose 'light blue eyes' were 'tender over drowning flies'? and the 'oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies.'"

"I do now, but they are not so bad as that about the costly funeral. Why does he do it—tell me that—put me wise?"

"I suppose we must all have our bit of fun now and again. Kean, when in the middle of his most rousing piece of declamation, used to turn from his spellbound audience and put out his tongue at one of the scene-shifters. If you want to be kept constantly at the highest level you must stick to Milton."

There was a pause before Dorothy said,—

"I suppose so; and yet was there ever anything funnier than his description of the battle in heaven?"

"Funny? Majestic, you mean?" said I, deeply shocked.

"Well, majestically funny, if you wish. The idea of those 'ethereal virtues' throwing big stones at one another, and knowing all the time that it didn't matter whether they were hit or not—the gashes closed like the gashes we loved making with our spades in the stranded jelly-fish at low tide. But I suppose you will tell me that Milton must have his joke with the rest of them. Oh, I wonder if all poetry is not a fraud."

That is how Tennyson did for himself by not knowing where to stop. I expect that what really happened was that when he had written:—

"So past the strong, heroic soul away,"

he found that there was still room for a couple of lines on the page and he could not bear to see the space wasted.

And it was not wasted either; for I remember talking to the late Dr. John Todhunter, himself a most accomplished poet and a scholarly critic, about the "costlier funeral" lines, and he defended them warmly.

And the satisfying of Dr. Todhunter must be regarded as counting for a good deal more in the balance against my poor Dorothy's disapproval.

Lest this chapter should appear aggressively digressive in a book that may be fancied to have something to do with gardens, I may say that while Alfred, Lord Tennyson had a great love for observing the peculiarities of flower and plant growths, he must have cared precious little for the garden as the solace

of one's declining years. He did not pant for it as the hart pants for the water-brooks. He never came to think of the hours spent out of a garden as wasted. He did not live in his garden, nor did he live for it. That is what amazes us in these days, nearly as much as the stories of the feats of Mr. Gladstone with the axe of the woodcutter. Not many of us would have the heart to stand by while a magnificent oak or sycamore is being cut down. We would shrink from such an incident as we should from an execution. But forty years ago the masses were ready to worship the executioner. They used to be admitted in crowds to Hawarden to watch the heroic old gentleman in his shirt-sleeves and with his braces hanging down, butchering a venerable elm in his park, and when the trunk crashed to the ground they cheered vociferously, and when he wiped the perspiration from his brow, they rushed forward to dip their handkerchiefs in the drops just as men and women tried to damp their handkerchiefs in the drippings of the axe of the headsman, who, in a stroke, slew a monarch and made a martyr, outside the Banqueting House in Whitehall.

And when the excursionists were cheering the hero of Hawarden, Thomas Hardy was writing *The Woodlanders*. Between Hardy and Hawarden there was certainly a great gulf fixed. I do not think that any poet ever wrote an elegy so affecting as the chapter on the slaying of the oak outside the house of the old man who died of the shock. But the scent of the woodland clings to the whole book; I have read

it once a year for more than a quarter of a century.

Tennyson never showed that he loved his garden as Mr. Hardy showed he loved his woodland. In the many beautiful lines suggesting his affection for his lawns and borders Tennyson makes a reader feel that his joy was purely Platonic—sometimes patronisingly Platonic. It is very far from approaching the passion of a lover for his mistress. One feels that he actually held that the garden was made for the poet not the poet for the garden, which, I need hardly say, we all hold to be a heresy. The union between the true garden-lover and the garden may be a mésalliance, but that is better than *marriage de convenance.*

But to return to the subject of Poets' Gardens, we agreed that the gardens of neither of the poet's dwelling-places were worth noticing; but they were miracles of design compared with that at the red brick villa where the white buses stopped at Putney—the house where the body of Algernon Charles Swinburne lay carefully embalmed by his friend, Theodore Watts-Dunton. Highly favoured visitors were occasionally admitted to inspect the result of the process by which the poet had his palpitations reduced to the discreet beats of the Putney metronome, and visitors shook their heads and said it was a marvellous reformation. So it was—a triumph of the science of embalming, not " with spices and savour of song," but with the savourless salt of True Friendship. The reformed poet was now presentable, but he was no longer a live poet: the work of reformation had

changed the man into a mummy—a most presentable mummy; and it was understood that the placid existence of a mummy is esteemed much more than the passionate rapture of an early morning lark, or of the nightingale that has a bad habit of staying out all night.

It is a most unhappy thing that the first operation of the professional embalmer is to extract the brains of his subject, and this was done through the medium of a quill—a very suitable implement in the case of a writer: he has begun the process himself long before he is stretched on the table of the operator. Almost equally important it is that the subject should be thoroughly dried. Mr. Swinburne's true friend knew his business: he kept him perpetually dry and with his brain atrophied.

The last time I saw the poet he was on view under the desiccating influence of a biscuit factory. He looked very miserable, and I know that I felt very miserable observing the triumph of the Watts-Dunton treatment, and remembering the day when the glory and glow of *Songs before Sunrise* enwrapt me until I felt that the whole world would awaken when such a poet set the trumpet to his lips to blow!

Mr. Watts-Dunton played the part of Vivien to that merle Merlin, and all the forest echoed "Fool!"

But it was really a wonderful reformation that he brought about.

. . . . . .

I looked into the garden at that Putney reformatory many times. It was one of the genteelest places

I ever saw and so handy for the buses. It was called, by one of those flashes of inspiration not unknown in the suburbs, "The Pines." It might easily have been "The Cedars" or "The Hollies," or even "Laburnum Villa."

The poet was carefully shielded by his true freind. Few visitors were allowed to see him. The more pushing were, however, met half-way. They were permitted as a treat to handle the knob of Mr. Swinburne's walking-stick.

Was it, I wonder, a Transatlantic visitor who picked up from the linoleum of the hall beside the veneered mahogany hat-stand, and the cast-iron umbrella-holder, a scrap of paper in the poet's handwriting with the stanza of a projected lyric?—

"I am of dust and of dryness;
I am weary of dryness and dust!
But for my constitutional shyness
I'd go on a bust."

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH

I CAME across an excellent piece of advice the other day in a commonplace volume on planning a garden. It was in regard to the place of statuary in a garden. But the writer is very timid in this matter. He writes as if he hoped no one would overhear him when he says that he has no rooted objection, although many people have, to a few bits of statuary; but on no plea would he allow them the freedom of the garden; their place should be close to the house, and they should be admitted even to that restricted territory only with the greatest caution. On no account should anything of that sort be allowed to put a foot beyond where the real garden begins—the real clearly being the herbaceous part, though the formal is never referred to as the ideal.

He gives advice regarding the figures as does a " friend of the family " when consulted about the boys who are inclined to be wild or the girls who are a bit skittish. No, no; one should be very firm with Hermes; from the stories that somehow get about regarding him, he is certainly inclined to be fast; he must not be given a latch-key; and as for Artemis—well, it is most likely only thoughtlessness on her part, but she should not be allowed to hunt more than two

days a week. Still, if looked after, both Hermy and Arty will be all right; above all things, however, the list of their associates should be carefully revised: the fewer companions they have the better it will be for all concerned.

Now, I venture to agree with all this advice generally. Fond as I am of statuary, whether stone or lead, I am sure that it is safest in or about the House Garden; and no figure that I possess is in any other part of my ground; but this is only because I do not possess a single Faun or Dryad or Daphne. If I were lucky enough to have these, I should know where to place them and it would not be in a place of formality, but just the opposite. They have no business with formalities, and would look as incongruous among the divinities who seem quite happy on pedestals as would Pan in modern evening dress, or a Russian *danceuse* in corsets, or a Polish in anything at all.

If I had a Pan I would not be afraid to locate him in the densest part of a shrubbery, where only his ears and the grin between them could be seen among the foliage and his goat's shank among the lower branches. His effigy is shown in its legitimate place in Gabe's Picture, " Fête Galante." That is the correct habitat of Pan, and that is where he would be shown in the hall of the Natural History Museum where every " exhibit " has its natural *entourage*. If I had a Dryad and had not a pond with reeds about its marge, I would make one for her accommodation, for, except with such surroundings she should not be

seen in a garden. I have a Daphne, but she is an indoor one, being frailly made, and with a year's work of undercutting, in Greek marble—a precious copy of Bernini's masterpiece. But if I had an outdoor Daphne, I would not rest easy unless I knew that she was within easy touch of her laurel.

That is why I do not think that any hard and fast rule should be laid down in the matter of the disposal of statuary in a garden ground. But on the general principle of "the proper place," I certainly am of the opinion expressed by the writer to whom I have referred—that this element of interest and beauty should be found mainly in connection with the stonework of the house. In any part of an Italian garden stone figures seem properly placed; because so much of that form of garden is made up of sculptured stone; but in the best examples of the art you will find that the statuary is placed with due regard to the "feature" it is meant to illustrate. It is, in fact, part of the design and eminently decorative, as well as being stimulating to the memory and suggestive to the imagination. In most of the English gardens that were planned and carried out during the greater part of the nineteenth century, the stone and lead figures that formed a portion of the original design of the earlier days were thrown about without the least reference to their fitness for the places they were forced to occupy; and the consequence was that they never seemed right: they seemed to have no business where they were; hence the creation of a prejudice against such things. Happily, however, now

that it is taken for granted that garden design is the work of some one who is more of an architect than a horticulturist, though capability in the one direction is intolerable without its complement in the other, the garden ornamental is coming into its own again; and the prices which even ordinary and by no means unique examples fetch under the hammer show that they are being properly appreciated.

It is mainly in public parks that one finds the horticultural skill overbalanced, not by the architectural, but by the "Parks Committee" of the Town Council; consequently knowing, as every one must, the usual type of the Town Council Committee-man, one can only look for a display of ignorance, stupidity, and bad taste, the result of a combination of the three being sheer vulgarity. The Town Council usually have a highly competent horticulturist, and his part of the business is done well; but I have known many cases of the professional man being overruled by a vulgar, conceited member of the Committee even on a professional point, such as the arrangement of colour in a bed of single dahlias.

"My missus abominates yaller," was enough to veto a thoroughly artistic scheme for a portion of a public garden.

I was in the studio of a distinguished portrait painter in London on what was called "Show Sunday"—the Sunday previous to the sending of the pictures to the Hanging Committee of the Royal Academy, and there I was introduced by the artist, who wanted to throw the fellow at somebody's head,

not having anything handy that he could, without discourtesy, throw at the fellow's head, to a gentleman representing the Committee of Selection of a movement in one of the most important towns in the Midlands, to present the outgoing Lord Mayor with a portrait of himself. With so aggressively blatant a specimen of cast-iron conceit I had never previously been brought in contact. At least three of the portraits on the easels in the studio were superb. At the Academy Exhibition they attracted a great deal of attention and the most laudatory criticism. But the delegate from the Midlands shook his head at them and gave a derisive snuffle.

"Not up to much," he muttered to me. "I reckon I'll deal in another shop. I ain't the sort as is carried away by the sound of a name. I may not be one of your crickets; but I know what I like and I know what I don't like, and these likenesses is them. Who's that old cock with the heyglass—I somehow seem to feel that I've seen him before?"

I told him that the person whom he indicated was Lord Goschen.

"I guessed he was something in that line—wears the heyglass to make people fancy he's something swagger. Well, so long."

That was the last we saw of the delegate. He was not one of the horny-handed, I found out; but he had some connection with these art-arbiters; he was the owner of a restaurant that catered for artisans of the lower grade.

I had the curiosity to inquire of a friend living in

the town he represented so efficiently, respecting the commission for the portrait, and he gave me the name of a flashy meretricious painter whose work was treated with derision from Chelsea to St. John's Wood. But my informant added that the Committee of the Council were quite pleased with the portrait, and had drunk the health of the painter on the day of its presentation.

When a distinguished writer expressed the opinion that there is safety in a multitude of councillors, he certainly did not mean Town Councillors. If he did he was wrong.

When on the subject of the garden ornamental, I should like to venture to express my opinion that it is a mistake to fancy that it is not possible to furnish your grounds tastefully and in a way that will add immensely to their interest unless with conventional objects—in the way of sundials or bird baths or vases or seats. I know that the Venetian well-heads which look so effective, cost a great deal of money, and so does the wrought-iron work if it is at all good, and unless it is good it is not worth possessing. But if you have an uncontrollable ambition to possess a well-head, why not get the local builder to construct one for you, with rubble facing of bits of stone of varying colour, only asking a mason to make a sandstone coping for the rim and carve the edge? This could be done for three or four pounds, and if properly designed would make a most interesting and suggestive ornament.

There is scarcely a stonemason's yard in any town

that will not furnish a person of some resource with many bits of spoilt carving that could be used to advantage if the fault is not obtrusive. If you live in a brick villa, you may consider yourself fortunate in some ways; for you need not trouble about stone-work—brick-coloured terra-cotta ornaments will give a delightful sense of warmth to a garden, and these may be bought for very little if you go to the right place for them; and your builder's catalogue will enable you to see what an endless variety of sizes and shapes there is available in the form of enrichments for shop façades. Only a little imagination is required to allow of your seeing how you can work in some of these to advantage.

But, in my opinion, nothing looks better in a villa garden than a few large flower-pots of what I might perhaps call the natural shape. These never seem out of place and never in bad taste. Several that I have seen have a little enrichment, and if you get your builder to make up a low brick pedestal for each, using angle bricks and pier bricks, you will be out of pocket to the amount of a few shillings and you will have obtained an effect that will never pall on you. But you must remember that the pedestal—I should call it the stand—should be no more than a foot high. I do not advocate the employment of old terra-cotta drain-pipes for anything in a garden. Nothing can be made out of drain-pipes except a drain.

There is, of course, no need for any garden to depend on ornaments for good effect; a garden is well

furnished with its flowers, and you will find great pleasure in realising your ideas and your ideals if you devote yourself to growth and growth only; all that I do affirm is that your pleasure will be greatly increased if you try by all the means in your power to make your garden worthy of the flowers. The "love that beauty should go beautifully," will, I think, meet with its reward.

Of course, if you have a large piece of ground and take my advice in making several gardens instead of one only, you may make a red garden of some portion by using terra-cotta freely, and I am sure that the effect would be pleasing. I have often thought of doing this; but somehow I was never in possession of a piece of ground that would lend itself to such a treatment, though I have made a free use of terra-cotta vases along the rose border of my house garden, and I found that the placing of a large well-weathered Italian oil-jar between the pillars of a colonnade, inserting a pot of coloured daisies, was very effective, and intensely stimulating to the pantomime erudition of our visitors, for never did one catch a glimpse of these jars without crying, "Hallo! Ali Baba." I promised to forfeit a sum of money equivalent to the price of one of the jars to a member of our family on the day when a friend walks round the place failing to mention the name of that wily Oriental. It is quite likely that behind my back they allude to the rose colonnade as "The Ali Baba place."

Before I leave the subject of the garden ornamental, I must say a word as to the use of marble.

I have seen in many of those volumes of such good advice as will result, if it is followed, in the creation of a thoroughly conventional garden, that in England the use of marble out-of-doors cannot be tolerated. It may pass muster in Italy, where there are quarries of various marbles, but it is quite unsuited to the English climate. The material is condemned as cold, and that is the last thing we want to achieve in these latitudes, and it is also " out of place "—so one book assures me, but without explaining on what grounds it is so, an omission which turns the assertion into a begging of the question.

But I am really at a loss to know why marble should be thought out of place in England. As a matter of fact, it is not so considered, for in most cemeteries five out of every six tombstones are of marble, and all the more important pieces of statuary —the life-size angels—I do not know exactly what is the life-size of an angel, or whether the angel has been standardised, so I am compelled to assume the human dimensions—and the groups of cherubs' heads supported on pigeon's wings are almost invariably carved in marble. These are the objects which are supposed to endure for centuries (the worst of it is that they do), so that the material cannot be condemned on account of its being liable to disintegrate under English climatic conditions: the mortality of marble cannot cease the moment it is brought into a graveyard.

The fact of its being mainly white accounts for the complaint that it conveys the impression of coldness;

but it seems to me that this is just the impression which people look to acquire in some part of a garden. How many times has one not heard the exclamation from persons passing out of the sunshine into the grateful shade,—

"How delightfully cool!"

The finest chimney-pieces in the world are of white marble, and a chimney-piece should certainly not suggest cold.

That polished marble loses its gloss when it has been for some time in the open air is undeniable. But I wonder if it is not improved by the process, considering that in such a condition it assumes a delicate gray hue in the course of its "weathering" and a texture of its own of a much finer quality than can be found in ordinary Portland, Bath, or Caen stones.

I really see no reason why we should be told that marble—white marble—is unsuited to an English garden. In Italy we know how beautiful is its appearance, and I do not think that any one should be sarcastic in referring to the façades of some of the mansions in Fifth Avenue, New York City. At least three of these represent the best that can be bought combined with the best that can be thought. They do not look aggressively ostentatious, any more than does Milan Cathedral or Westminster Abbey, or Lyons' restaurants. Marble enters largely into the "frontages" of Fifth Avenue as well as those of other abodes of the wealthy in some of the cities of the United States; but we are warned off its use in

the open air in England by writers who are not timid in formulating canons of what they call "good taste." In the façade of the Cathedral at Pisa, there is a black column among the gray ones which are so effectively introduced in the Romanesque "blind arcading." I am sorry that I forget what is the technical name for this treatment; but I have always thought, when feasting upon the architectural masterpiece, that the master-builder called each of these little columns by the name of one of his supporters, but that there was one member of the Consistory who was always nagging him, and he determined to set a black mark opposite his name; and did so very effectively by introducing the dark column, taking good care to let all his friends know the why and wherefore for his freak. I can see very plainly the grins of the townsfolk of the period when they saw what had been done, and hear the whispers of "Signor Antonio della colonna nigra," when the grumbler walked by. The master-builders of those times were merry fellows, and some of them carried their jests—a few of them of doubtful humour—into the interior of a sacred building, as we may see when we inspect the carving of the underneath woodwork of many a *miserere*.

I should like to set down in black and white my protest against the calumniator of marble for garden ornaments in England, when we have so splendid an example of its employment in the Queen Victoria Memorial opposite Buckingham Palace—the noblest work of this character in England.

I should like also to write something scathing about

the superior person who sneers at what I have heard called "Gin Palace Art." This person is ready to condemn unreservedly the association of art with the public-house, the hotel, and even the tea-room. Now, considering the recent slump in real palaces—the bishops have begun calling their palaces houses—I think that some gratitude should be shown to those licensed persons who so amply recognise the fact that upon them devolves the responsibiltiy of carrying on the tradition of the Palace. Long ago, in the days when there were real Emperors and Kings and Popes, it was an understood thing that a Royal Residence should be a depository of all the arts, and in every country except England, this assumption was nobly acted upon. If it had not been for the magnificent patronage—that is the right word, for it means protection—of many arts by the Church and by the State of many countries, we should know very little about the arts to-day. But when the men of many licences had the name "gin-palace" given to their edifices—it was given to them in the same spirit of obloquy as animated the scoffers of Antioch when they invented the name "Christian"—they nobly resolved to act as the Christians did, by trying to live up to their new name. We see how far success has crowned their resolution. The representative hostelries of these days go beyond the traditional king's house which was all glorious within—they are all glorious—so far as is consistent with educated taste—as to their exterior as well. A "tied house" really means nowadays one that is tied down to the

resolution that the best traditions of the palace shall be maintained.

Let any one who can remember what the hotels and public-houses and eating-houses of forty years ago were like, say if the change that has been brought about is not an improvement that may be considered almost miraculous. In the old days when a man left the zinc counters of one of these places of refreshment, he was usually in a condition that was alluded to euphemistically as "elevated"; but nowadays the man who pays a visit to a properly equipped tavern is elevated in no euphemistic sense. I remember the cockroaches of the old Albion—they were so tame that they would eat out of your hand. But if they did, the *habitués* of that tavern had their revenge: some of these expert gastronomes professed to be able to tell from the flavour of the soup whether it had been seasoned with the cockroaches of the table or the black beetles of the kitchen.

"What do you mean, sir?" cried an indignant diner to the waiter—"I ordered portions for three, and yet there are only two cockroaches."

I recollect in the old days of The Cock tavern in Fleet Street it was said when the report was circulated that it was enlarging its borders, that the name on the sign should be appropriately enlarged from the Cock to the Cockroach.

I heard an explanation given of the toleration shown by some of the frequenters of these places to the cockroach and the blackbeetle.

"They're afraid to complain," said my informant,

" lest it should be thought that they were *seeing them again.*"

I shall never forget the awful dewey stare of a man who was facing a tumbler (his third) of hot punch in the Cheshire Cheese, at a mouse which made its appearance only a yard or two from where we were sitting shortly before closing time one night. He wiped his forehead and still stared. The aspect of relief that he showed when I made a remark about the tameness of the mouse, quite rewarded me for my interposition between old acquaintances.

Having mentioned the Cheshire Cheese in connection with the transition period from zinc to marble—marble is really my theme—I cannot resist the temptation to refer to the well-preserved tradition of Dr. Johnson's association with this place. Visitors were shown the place where Dr. Johnson was wont to sit night after night with his friends—nay, the very chair that he so fully occupied was on view; and among the most cherished memories of seeing " Old London " which people from America acquired, was that of being brought into such close touch with the eighteenth century by taking lunch in this famous place.

" There it was just as it had been in good old Samuel's day," said a man who knew all about it. " Nothing in the dear old tavern had been changed since his day—nothing whatever—not even the sand or the sawdust or the smells."

But it so happens that in the hundreds of volumes of contemporary Johnsoniana, not excepting Bos-

well's biography, there is no mention of the name of the Cheshire Cheese. There is not a shred of evidence to support the belief that Johnson was ever within its doors. The furthest that conjecture can reasonably go in this connection is that one has no right to assume that from the list of the taverns frequented by Johnson the name of the Cheshire Cheese should be excluded.

The fate of the Cheshire Cheese, however, proves that while tradition as an asset may be of great value to such a place, yet it has its limits. Just as soap and the " spellin' school " have done away with the romance of the noble Red Man, so against the influence of the marble of modernity, even the full flavoured aura of Dr. Johnson was unable to hold its own.

Thus I am brought back—not too late, I hope—to my original theme, which I think took the form of a protest against the protestations of those writers who believe that marble should not find its way into the ornamentation of an English garden. I have had seats and tables and vases and columns of various marbles in my House Garden—I have even had a fountain basin and carved panels of flowers and birds of the same material—but although some of them show signs of being affected by the climate, yet nothing has suffered in this way—on the contrary, I find that Sicilian and " dove " marbles have improved by " weathering."

I have a large round table, the top of which is inlaid with a variety of coloured marbles, and as I allow

this to remain out-of-doors during seven months of the year, I know what sorts best withstand the rigours of an English South Coast June; and I am inclined to believe that the ordinary "dove" shows the least sign of hardship at the end of the season. Of course, the top has lost all its polish, but the cost of repolishing such a table is not more than ten shillings—I had another one done some years ago, and that is the sum I was charged for the work by a well-known firm on the Fulham Road; so that if I should get tired of seeing it weather-beaten, I can get it restored without impoverishing the household.

And the mention of this leads me on to another point which should not be lost sight of in considering any scheme of garden decoration.

My Garden of Peace has never been one of "peace at any price." I have happily been compelled to give the most inflexible attention to the price of everything. I like those books on garden design which tell you how easily you can get leaden figures and magnificent chased vases of bronze if you wish, but perhaps you would prefer carved stone. You have only to go to a well-known importer with a cheque-book and a consciousness of a workable bank balance, and the thing is done. So you will find in the pre-war cookery books the recipe beginning: "Take two dozen new-laid eggs, a quart of cream, and a pint of old brandy," etc. These bits of advice make very good reading, and doubtless may be read with composure by some people, but I am not among their number.

That table, with the twelve panels and a heavy

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pedestal set on castors, cost me exactly half a crown at an auction. When new it was probably bought for twelve or fourteen pounds: it is by no means a piece of work of the highest class; for a first-class inlaid table one would have to pay something like forty or fifty pounds: I have seen one fetch £150 at an auction. But my specimen happened to be the Lot 1 in the catalogue, and people had not begun to warm to their bidding,—marble, as I have already said, is regarded as cold. Another accident that told against its chances of inspiring a buyer was the fact that the pedestal wanted a screw, without which the top would not lie in its place, and this made people think it imperfect and incapable of being put right except at great expense. The chief reason for its not getting beyond the initial bid was, however, that no one wanted it. The mothers, particularly those of " the better class," in Yardley, are lacking in imagination. If they want a deal table for a kitchen, they will pay fifteen shillings for one, and ten shillings for a slab of marble to make their pastry on; but they would not give half a crown for a marble table which would serve for kitchen purposes a great deal better than a wooden one, and make a baking slab—it usually gets broken within a month—unnecessary.

Why I make so free a use of marble and advise others to do so, is not merely because I admire it in every form and colour, but because it can be bought so very cheaply upon occasions—infinitely more so than Portland or Bath stone. These two rarely come into the second-hand market, and in the mason's yard

a slab is worth so much a square foot or a cubic foot. But people are now constantly turning out their shapeless marble mantelpieces and getting wooden ones instead, and the only person who will buy the former is the general dealer, and the most that he will give for one that cost £10 or £12 fifty years ago is 10s. or 12s. I have bought from dealers or builders possibly two dozen of these, never paying more than 10s. each for the best—actually for the one which I know was beyond question the best, I paid 6s., the price at which it was offered to me. An exceptionally fine one of statuary marble with fluted columns and beautifully carved Corinthian capitals and panels cost me 10s. This mantelpiece was discarded through one of those funny blunders which enable one to get a bargain. The owner of the house fancied that it was a production of 1860, when it really was a hundred years earlier. There are marble mantelpieces and marble mantelpieces. Some fetch 10s. and others £175. I knew a dealer who bought a large house solely to acquire the five Bossi mantelpieces which it contained. Occasionally one may pick up an eighteenth century crystal chandelier which has been discarded on the supposition that it was one of those shapeless and tasteless gasaliers which delighted our grandmothers in the days of rep and Berlin wool.

But from these confessions I hope no one will be so ungenerous as to fancy that my predilection for marble is to be accounted for only because of the chances of buying it cheaply. While I admit that I prefer buying a beautiful thing for a tenth of its

value, I would certainly refuse to have anything to do with an ugly thing if it were offered to me for nothing. But the beauty of marble is unassailable. It has been recognised in every quarter of the world for thousands of years. The only question upon which opinion is divided is in regard to its suitability to the English climate. In this connection I beg leave to record my experience. I take it for granted that when I allude to marble, it will not be supposed that I include that soft gypsum—sulphate of lime—which masquerades under the name of alabaster, and is carved with the tools of a woodcarver, supplemented by a drill and a file, in many forms by Italian craftsmen. This material will last in the open air very little longer than the plaster of Paris, by which its numerous component parts are held together. It is worth nothing. True alabaster is quite a different substance. It is carbonate of lime and disintegrates very slowly. The tomb of Machiavelli in the Santa Croce in Florence is of the true alabaster, as are all the fifteenth and sixteenth century sarcophagi in the same quarter of the church; but none can be said to have suffered materially. It was widely used in memorial tablets three hundred or four hundred years ago. Shakespeare makes Othello refer to the sleeping Desdemona,—

> "That whiter skin of hers than snow,
> And smooth as monumental alabaster."

We know that it was the musical word "alabaster" that found favour with Shakespeare, just as it was,

according to Miss Ethel Smyth, Mus. Doc., the musical word "Tipperary," that helped to make a song containing that word a favourite with Shakespeare's countrymen, who have never been found lacking in appreciation of a musical word or a rag-time inanity.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH

Again may I beg leave to express the opinion that there is no need for any one to depend upon conventional ornaments with a view to make the garden interesting as well as ornamental. With a little imagination, one can introduce quite a number of details that are absolutely unique. There is nothing that looks better than an arch made out of an old stone doorway. It may be surmounted by a properly supported shield carved with a crest or a monogram. A rose pillar of stone has a charming appearance at the end of a vista. The most effective I have seen were made of artificial stone, and they cost very little. Many of the finest garden figures of the eighteenth century were made of this kind of cement, only inferior in many respects to the modern "artificial stone." It is unnecessary to say that any material that resists frost will survive that comparatively soft stone work which goes from bad to worse year by year in the open.

But I do not think that, while great freedom and independence should be shown in the introduction of ornamental work, one should ever go so far as to construct in cold blood a ruin of any sort, nor is there any need, I think, to try to make a new piece look antique.

But I have actually known of a figure being deprived of one of its arms in order to increase its resemblance to the Venus of the island of Milos! Such mutilation is unwarrantable. I have known of Doctors of Medicine taking pains to make their heads bald, in compliance with the decrepit notion that knowledge was inseparable from a venerable age. There may be an excuse for such a proceeding, though to my mind this posturing lacks only two letters to be imposturing; but no excuse can be found for breaking the corner off a piece of moulding or for treating a stone figure with chemicals in order to suggest antiquity. Such dealers as possess a clientele worth maintaining, know that a thing "in mint condition," as they describe it, is worth more than a similar thing that is deficient in any way. That old story about the artificial worm-eating will not be credited by any one who is aware of the fact that a piece of woodwork showing signs of the ravages of the wood moth is practically worthless. There would be some sense in a story of a man coming to a dealer with a composition to prevent worm-holes, as they are called, being recognised. Ten thousand pounds would not be too much to pay for a discovery that would prevent woodwork from being devoured by this abominable thing. Surely some of the Pasteur professors should be equal to the task of producing a serum by which living timber might be inoculated so as to make it immune to such attacks, or liable only to the disease in a mild form.

But there are dealers in antiques whose dealings

are as doubtful as their Pentateuch (according to Bishop Colenso's researches). Heywood tells me that he came across such an one in a popular seaside town which became a modern Hebrew City of Refuge, mentioned in one of the Mosaic books, during the air-raids. This person had for sale a Highland claidh-eamh-mór—that is, I can assure you, the proper way to spell claymore—which he affirmed had once belonged to the Young Pretender. There it was, with his initials "Y. P.," damascened upon the blade, to show that there could be no doubt about it.

And Friswell remembered hearing of another enterprising trader in antiquities who had bought from a poor old captain of an American whaler a sailor's jack-knife—Thackeray called the weapon a snicker-snee—which bore on the handle in plain letters the name "Jonah," very creditably carved. Everybody knows that whales live to a very great age; and it has never been suggested that there was at any time a clearing-house for whales.

I repeat that there is no need for garden ornaments to be ancient; but if one must have such things, one should have no difficulty in finding them, even without spending enormous sums to acquire them. But say that one has set one's heart upon having a stone bench, which always furnishes a garden, no matter what its character may be. Well, I have bought a big stone slab—it had once been a step—for five shillings. I kept it until I chanced to see a damaged Portland truss that had supported a heavy joist in some building. This I had sawn into two—there was a

well-cut scroll on each side—and by placing these bits in position and laying my slab upon them, I concocted a very imposing garden bench for thirteen shillings. If I had bought the same already made up in the ordinary course of business, it would have cost me at least £5. If I had seen the thing in a mason's yard, I would have bought it at this price.

Again, I came upon an old capital of a pillar that had once been in an Early Norman church—it was in the backyard of a man from whom I was buying bulbs. I told the man that I would like it, and he said he thought half a crown was about its value. I did not try to beat him down—one never gets a bargain by beating a tradesman down—and I set to work rummaging through his premises. In ten minutes I had discovered a second capital; and the good fellow said I might have this one as I had found it. I thought it better, however, to make the transaction a business one, so I paid my second half-crown for it. But two years had passed before I found two stone shafts with an aged look, and on these I placed my Norman relics. They look very well in the embrace of a Hiawatha rose against a background of old wall. These are but a few of the "made-ups" which furnish my House Garden, not one of which I acquired in what some people would term the legitimate way.

I have a large carved seat of Sicilian marble, another of "dove" marble, and three others of carved stone, and no one of them was acquired by me in a complete state. Why should not a man or woman who has some training in art and who has seen the

best architectural things in the world be able to design something that will be equal to the best in a stonemason's yard, I should like to know?

And then, what about the pleasure of working out such details—the pleasure and the profit of it? Surely they count for something in this life of ours.

Before I forsake the fascinating topic of stonework, I should like to make a suggestion which I trust will commend itself to some of my readers. It is that of hanging appropriate texts on the walls of a garden. I have not attempted anything like this myself, but I shall certainly do it some day. Garden texts exist in abundance, and to have one carved upon a simple block of stone and inserted in a wall would, I think, add greatly to the interest of the garden. I have seen a couple of such inscriptions in a garden near Florence, and I fancy that in the Lake District of England the custom found favour, or Wordsworth would not have written so many as he did for his friends. The "lettering"—the technical name for inscriptions—would run into money if a poet paid by piece-work were employed; unless he were as considerate as the one who did some beautiful tombstone poems and thought that,—

"Beneath this stone repose the bones, together with the corp,
Of one who ere Death cut him down was Thomas Andrew Thorpe,"

was good; and so it was; but as the widow was not disposed to spend so much as the "lettering" would cost, he reduced his verse to:—

" Beneath this stone there lies the corp
Of Mr. Thomas Andrew Thorpe."

Still the widow shook her head and begged him to give the question of a further curtailment his consideration. He did so, and produced,—

" Here lies the corp
Of T. A. Thorpe."

This was a move in the right direction, the heart-broken relict thought; still if the sentiment was so compressible, it might be further reduced. Flowery language was all very well, but was it worth the extra money? The result of her appeal was,—

" Thorpe's
Corpse."

I found some perfect garden texts in every volume I glanced through, from Marlowe to Masefield.

Yes, I shall certainly revive on some of my walls, between the tufts of snapdragon, a delightful practice, feeling assured that the crop will flower in many directions. The search for the neatest lines will of itself be stimulating.

But among the suitable objects for the embellishment of any form of garden, I should not recommend any form of dog. We have not completed our repairing of one of our borders since a visit was paid to us quite unexpectedly by a young foxhound that was being " walked " by a dealer in horses, who has stables

a little distance beyond the Castle. Our third little girl, Francie by name, has an overwhelming sympathy for animals in captivity, especially dogs, and the fact that I do not keep any since I had an unhappy experience with a mastiff several years ago, is not a barrier to her friendship with "Mongrel, puppy, whelp, or hound, and curs of low degree" that are freely cursed by motorists in the High Street; for in Yardley dogs have trained themselves to sleep in the middle of the road on warm summer days. Almost every afternoon Francie returns from her walks abroad in the company of two or three of her borrowed dogs; and if she is at all past her time in setting out from home, one of them comes up to make inquiries as to the cause of the delay.

Some months ago the foxhound, Daffodil, who gallantly prefers being walked by a little girl, even though she carries no whip, rather than by a horsey man who is never without a serviceable crop with a lash, personally conducted a party of three to find out if anything serious had happened to Francie; and in order to show off before the others, he took advantage of the garden gate having been left open to enter and relieve his anxiety. He seemed to have done a good deal of looking round before he was satisfied that there was no immediate cause for alarm, and in the course of his stroll he transformed the border, adapting it to an impromptu design of his own—not without merit, if his aim was a reproduction of a prairie.

After an industrious five minutes he received some

token of the gardener's disapproval, and we hope that in a few months the end of our work of restoration will be well in sight.

But Nemesis was nearer at hand than that horticultural hound dreamt of. Yesterday Francie appeared in tears after her walk; and this is the story of *illæ lachrymæ:* It appears that the days of Daffodil's "walking" were over, and he was given an honourable place in the hunt kennels. The master and a huntsman now and again take the full pack from their home to the Downs for an outing and bring them through the town on their way back. Yesterday such a route-march took place and the hounds went streaming in open order down the street. No contretemps seemed likely to mar the success of the outing; but unhappily Daffodil had not learned to the last page the discipline of the kennels, and when at the wrong moment Francie came out of the confectioner's shop, she was spied by her old friend, and he made a rush in front of the huntsman's horse to the little girl, nearly knocking her down in the exuberance of his greeting of her.

Alas! there was "greeting" in the Scotch meaning of the word, when Daffodil ignored the command of the huntsman and had only eaten five of the chocolates and an inch or two of the paper bag, when the hailstorm fell on him. . . .

"But once he looked back before he reached the pack," said Francie between her sobs—"he looked back at me—you see he had not time to say 'goodbye,' that horrid huntsman was so quick with his lash,

and I knew that that was why poor Daffy looked back —to say ' good-bye '—just his old look. Oh, I'll save up my birthday money next week and buy him. Poor Daff! Of course he knew me, and I knew him—I saw him through Miss Richardson's window above the doughnut tray—I knew him among all the others in the pack."

Dorothy comforted her, and she became sufficiently herself again to be able to eat the remainder of the half-pound of chocolates, forgetting, in the excitement of the moment, to retain their share for her sisters.

When they found this out, their expressions of sympathy for the cruel fate that fell upon Daffodil were turned in another direction.

They did not make any allowance for the momentary thoughtlessness due to an emotional nature.

The question of the purchase of the young hound has not yet been referred to me; but without venturing too far in prejudging the matter, I think I may say that that transaction will not be consummated. The first of whatever inscriptions I may some day put upon my garden wall will be one in Greek:—

Ἔξω δὲ οἱ κύνες.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH

Dorothy and I were having a chat about some designs in Treillage when Friswell sauntered into the garden, bringing with him a fine book on the Influence of Cimabue on the later work of Andrea del Castagno. He had promised to lend it to me, when in a moment of abstraction I had professed an interest in the subject.

Dorothy showed him her sketches of the new scheme, explaining that it was to act as a screen for fig-tree corner, where the material for a bonfire had been collecting for some time in view of the Peace that we saw in our visions of a new heaven and a new earth long promised to the sons of men.

Friswell was good enough to approve of the designs. He said he thought that Treillage would come into its own again before long. He always liked it, because somehow it made him think of the Bible.

I did not like that. I shun topics that induce thoughts of the Bible in Friswell's brain. He is at his worst when thinking and expressing his thoughts on the Bible, and the worst of his worst is that it is just then he makes himself interesting.

But how on earth Treillage and the Bible should become connected in any man's mind would pass the

wit of man to explain. But when the appearance of my Temple compelled Friswell to think of Oxford Street, London, W., when his errant memory was carrying him on to the Princess's Theatre, on whose stage a cardboard thing was built—about as like my Temple as the late Temple of the Archdiocese of Canterbury was like the late Dr. Parker of the City Temple.

"I don't recollect any direct or mystical reference to Treillage in the Book," said I, with a leaning toward sarcasm in my tone of voice. "Perhaps you saw something of the kind on or near the premises of the Bible Society."

"It couldn't be something in a theatre again," suggested Dorothy.

"I believe it was on a garden wall in Damascus, but I'm not quite sure," said he thoughtfully. "Damascus is a garden city in itself. Thank Heaven it is safe for some centuries more. That ex-All Highest who had designs on it would fain have made it Potsdamascus."

"He would have done his devil best, pulling down the Treillage you saw there, because it was too French. Don't you think, Friswell, that you should try to achieve some sort of Treillage for your memory? You are constantly sending out shoots that come to nothing for want of something firm to cling to."

"Not a bad notion, by any means," said he. "But it has been tried by scores of experts on the science of—I forget the name of the science: I only know that its first two letters are mn."

"Mnemonics," said Dorothy kindly.

"What a memory you have!" cried Friswell. "A memory for the word that means memory. I think most of the artificial memories or helps to memory are ridiculous. They tell you that if you wish to remember one thing you must be prepared to recollect half a dozen other things—you are to be led to your destination by a range of sign-posts."

"I shouldn't object to the sign-posts providing that the destination was worth arriving at," said I. "But if it's only the front row of the dress circle at the Princess's Theatre, Oxford Street, London, West—"

"Or Damascus, Middle East," he put in, when I paused to breathe. "Yes, I agree with you; but after all, it wasn't Damascus, but only the General's house at Gibraltar."

"Have mercy on our frail systems, Friswell," I cried. "'We are but men, are we!' as Swinburne lilts. Think of our poor heads. Another such abrupt memory-post and we are undone. How is't with you, my Dorothy?"

"I seek a guiding hand," said she. "Come, Mr. Friswell; tell us how a General at Gib, suggested the Bible to you."

"It doesn't seem obvious, does it?" said he. "But it so happened that the noblest traditions of the Corps of Sappers was maintained by the General at Gib, in my day. He was mad, married, and a Methodist. He had been an intimate friend and comrade of Gordon, and he invited subscriptions from all the garrison for the Palestine Exploration Fund. He gave

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monthly lectures on the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and at every recurring Feast of Tabernacles he had the elaborate trellis that compassed about his house, hung with branches of Mosaic trees. That's the connection—as easily obvious as the origin of sin."

"Just about the same," said I. "Your chain of sign-posts is complete: Treillage—General—Gibraltar—Gordon—Gospel. That is how you are irresistibly drawn to think of the Bible when you see a clematis climbing up a trellis."

"My dear," said Dorothy, "you know that I don't approve of any attempt at jesting on the subject of the Bible."

"I wasn't jesting—only alliterative," said I. "Surely alliteration is not jocular."

"It's on the border," she replied with a nod.

"The Bible is all right if you are only content not to take it too seriously, my dear lady," said Friswell. "It does not discourage simple humour—on the contrary, it contains many examples of the Oriental idea of fun."

"Oh, Mr. Friswell! You will be saying next that it is full of puns," said Dorothy.

"I know of one, and it served as the foundation of the Christian Church," said he.

"My dear Friswell, are you not going too far?"

"Not a step. The choosing of Peter is the foundation of your Church, and the authority assumed by its priests. Simon Barjonah, nicknamed Peter, is one of the most convincingly real characters to be found

in any book, sacred or profane. How any one can read his record and doubt the inspiration of the Gospels is beyond me. I have been studying Simon Barjonah for many years—a conceited braggart and a coward—a blasphemer—maudlin! After he had been cursing and swearing in his denial of his Master, he went out and wept bitterly. Yes, but he wasn't man enough to stand by the Son of God—he was not even man enough to go to the nearest tree and hang himself. Judas Iscariot was a nobler character than Simon Barjonah, nicknamed Peter."

"And what does all this mean, Mr. Friswell?"

"It means that it is fortunate that Truth is not dependent upon the truth of its exponents or affected by their falseness," said he, and so took his departure.

We went on with our consideration of our Treillage—after a considerable silence. But when a silence comes between Dorothy and me it does not take the form of an impenetrable wall, nor yet that of a yew hedge with gaps in it; but rather that of a grateful screen of sweet-scented honeysuckle. It is the silence within a bower of white clematis—the silence of "heaven's ebon vault studded with stars unutterably bright"—the silence of the stars which is an unheard melody to such as have ears to hear.

"Yes," said I at last, "I am sure that you are right: an oval centre from which the laths radiate—that shall be our new trellis."

And so it was.

Our life in the Garden of Peace is, you will perceive, something of what the catalogues term "of

rampant growth." It is as digressive as a wild convolvulus. I perceive this now that I have taken to writing about it. It is not literary, but discursive. It throws out, it may be, the slenderest of tendrils in one direction; but this "between the bud and blossom," sometimes flies off in another, and the effect of the whole is pleasantly unforeseen.

It is about time that we had a firm trellis for the truant tendrils.

And so I will discourse upon Treillage as a feature of the garden.

Its effect seems to have been lost sight of for a long time, but happily within recent years its value as an auxiliary to decoration is being recognised. I have seen lovely bits in France as well as in Italy. It is one of the oldest imitations of Nature to be found in connection with garden-making, and to me it represents exactly what place art should take in that modification of Nature which we call a garden. We want everything that grows to be seen to the greatest advantage. Nature grows rampant climbers, and if we allowed them to continue rampageous, we should have a jungle instead of a garden; so we agree to give her a helping hand by offering her aspiring children something pleasant to cling to from the first hour of their sending forth grasping fingers in search of the right ladder for their ascent. A trellis is like a family living: it provides a decorative career for at least one member of the family.

The usual trellis-work, as it is familiarly called, has the merit of being cheap—just now it is more

than twice the price that it was five years ago; but still it does not run into a great deal of money unless it is used riotously, and this, let me say, is the very worst way in which it could be adapted to its purpose. To fix it all along the face of a wall of perhaps forty feet in length is to force it to do more than it should be asked to do. The wall is capable of supporting a climbing plant without artificial aid. But if the wall is unsightly, it were best hidden, and the eye can bear a considerable length of simple trellis without becoming weary. In this connection, however, my experience forces me to believe that one should shun the " extending " form of lattice-shaped work, but choose the square-mesh pattern.

This, however, is only Treillage in its elementary form. If one wishes to have a truly effective screen offering a number of exquisite outlines for the entwining of some of the loveliest things that grow, one must go further in one's choice than the simple diagonals and rectagonals—the simple verticals and horizontals. The moment that curves are introduced one gets into a new field of charm, and I know of no means of gaining better effects than by elaborating this form of joinery as the French did two centuries ago, before the discovery was made that every form of art in a garden is inartistic. But possibly if the French *treillageurs*—for the art had many professors—had been a little more modest in their claims the landscapests would not have succeeded in their rebellion. But the *treillageurs* protested against such beautiful designs as they turned out being obscured by plants clamber-

ing over them, and they offered in exchange repoussé metal foliage, affirming that this was incomparably superior to a natural growth. Ordinary people refused to admit so ridiculous a claim, and a cloud came over the prospects of these artists. Recently, however, with a truer rapprochement between the "schools" of garden design, I find several catalogues of eminent firms illustrating their reproductions of some beautiful French and Dutch work.

Personally, I have a furtive sympathy with the conceited Frenchmen. It seems to me that it would be a great shame to allow the growths upon a fine piece of Treillage to become so gross as to conceal all the design of the joinery. Therefore I hold that such ambitious climbers as Dorothy Perkins or Crimson Rambler should be provided with an unsightly wall and bade to make it sightly, and that to the more graceful and less distracting clematis should any first-class woodwork be assigned. This scheme will give both sides a chance in the summer, and in the winter there will be before our eyes a beautiful thing to look upon, even though it is no longer supporting a plant, and so fulfilling the ostensible object of its existence.

There should be no limit to the decorative possibilities of the Treillage lath. A whole building can be constructed on this basis. I have seen two or three very successful attempts in such a direction in Holland; and quite enchanting did they seem, overclambered by Dutch honeysuckle. I learned that all were copied from eighteenth century designs. I saw another Dutch design in an English garden in the North.

It took the form of a sheltered and canopied seat. It had a round tower at each side and a gracefully curved back. The "mesh" used in this little masterpiece was one of four inches. It was painted in a tint that looks best of all in garden word—the gray of the *echeveria glauca,* and the blooms of a beautiful Aglaïa rose were playing hide-and-seek among the laths of the roof. I see no reason why hollow pillars for roses should not be made on the Treillage principle. I have seen such pillars supporting the canopied roof of more than one balcony in front of houses in Brighton and Hove. I fancy that at one time these were fashionable in such places. In his fine work entitled *The English Home from Charles I. to George IV.,* Mr. J. Alfred Gotch gives two illustrations of Treillage adapted to balconies.

But to my mind, its most effective adaptation is in association with a pergola, especially if near the house. To be sure, if the space to be filled is considerable, the work for both sides would be somewhat expensive; but then the cost of such things is very elastic; it is wholly dependent upon the degrees of elaboration in the design. But in certain situations a pergola built up in this way may be made to do duty as an anteroom or a loggia, and as such it gives a good return for an expenditure of money; and if constructed with substantial uprights—I should recommend the employment of an iron core an inch in diameter for these, covered, I need hardly say, with the laths—and painted every second year, the structure should last for half a century. Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema car-

ried out a marvellous scheme of this type at his house in St. John's Wood. It was on a Dutch plan, but was not a copy of any existing arrangement of gardens. I happen to know that the design was elaborated by himself and his wife on their leaving his first St. John's Wood home: it was a model of what may be called *"l'haut Treillage."*

Once again I would venture to point out the advantage of having a handsome thing to look at during the winter months when an ordinary pergola looks its worst.

Regarding pergolas in general a good deal might be written. Their popularity in England just now is well deserved. There is scarcely a garden of any dimensions that is reckoned complete unless it encloses one within its walls. A more admirable means of dividing a ground space so as to make two gardens of different types, could scarcely be devised, in the absence of a yew or box growth of hedge; nor could one imagine a more interesting way of passing from the house to the garden than beneath such a roof of roses. In this case it should play the part of one of those "vistas" which were regarded as indispensable in the eighteenth century. It should have a legitimate entrance and it should not stop abruptly. If the exigencies of space make for such abruptness, not a moment's delay there should be in the planting of a large climbing shrub on each side of the exit so as to embower it, so to speak. A vase or a short pillar should compel the dividing of the path a little further on, and the grass verge—I am assuming the most awk-

ward of exits—should be rounded off in every direction, so as to cause the ornament to become the feature up to which the pergola path is leading. I may mention incidentally at this moment that such an isolated ornament as I have suggested gives a legitimate excuse for dividing any garden walk that has a tendency to weary the eye by its persistent straightness. Some years ago no one ever thought it necessary to make an excuse for a curve in a garden walk. The gardener simply got out his iron and cut out whatever curve he pleased on each side, and the thing was done. But nowadays one must have a natural reason for every deflection in a path; and an obstacle is introduced only to be avoided.

I need hardly say that there are pergolas and pergolas. I saw one that cost between two and three thousand pounds in a garden beyond Beaulieu, between Mont Boron and Monte Carlo—an ideal site. It was made up of porphyry columns with Corinthian carved capitals and wrought-iron work of a beautiful design, largely, but not lavishly, gilt, as a sort of frieze running from pillar to pillar; a bronze vase stood between each of the panels, and the handles of these were also gilt. I have known of quite respectable persons creating quite presentable pergolas for less money. In that favoured part of the world, however, everything bizarre and extravagant seems to find a place and to look in keeping with its surroundings.

The antithesis to this gorgeous and thoroughly beautiful piece of work I have seen in many gardens

in England. It is the " rustic " pergola, a thing that may be acquired for a couple of pounds and that may, with attention, last a couple of years. Anything is better than this—no pergola at all is better than this. In Italy one sees along the roadsides numbers of these structures overgrown with vines; but never yet did I see one that was not either in a broken-down condition or rapidly approaching such a condition; although the poles are usually made of chestnut which should last a long time—unlike our larch, the life of which when cut into poles and inserted in the cold earth does not as a rule go beyond the third year.

But there is something workable in this line between the three-thousand-pounder of the Riviera, and the three-pounder of Clapham. If people will only keep their eyes open for posts suitable for the pillars of a pergola, they will be able to collect a sufficient number to make a start with inside a year. The remainder of the woodwork I should recommend being brought already shaped and creosoted from some of those large sawmills where such work is made a speciality of. But there is no use getting anything that is not strong and durable, and every upright pillar should be embedded in concrete or cement. For one of my own pergolas—I do not call them pergolas but colonnades—I found a disused telegraph pole and sawed it into lengths of thirty inches each. These I sank eighteen inches in the ground at regular intervals and on each I doweled two oak poles six inches in diameter. They are standing well; for telegraph posts which have been properly treated are nearly as

durable as iron. All the woodwork for this I got ready sawn and "dipped" from a well-known factory at Croydon. It is eighty feet long and paved throughout. One man was able to put it up inside a fine fortnight in the month of January.

A second colonnade that I have is under forty feet in length. I made one side of it against a screen of sweetbrier roses which had grown to a height of twenty feet in five years. The making of it was suggested to me by the chance I had of buying at housebreaker's price a number of little columns taken from a shop that was being pulled down to give place, as usual, to a new cinema palace.

An amusing sidelight upon the imperiousness of fashion was afforded us when the painter set to work upon these. They had once been treated in that form of decoration known as "oak grained"—that pale yellow colour touched with an implement technically called a comb, professing to give to ordinary deal the appearance of British oak, and possibly deceiving a person here and there who had never seen oak. But when my painter began to burn off this stuff he discovered that the column had actually been papered and then painted and grained. This made his work easy, for he was able to tear the paper away in strips. But when he had done this he made the further discovery that the wood underneath was good oak with a natural grain showing!

Could anything be more ridiculous than the fashion of sixty or seventy years ago, when the art of graining had reached its highest level? Here were

beautiful oak columns which only required to be waxed to display to full advantage the graceful natural "feathering" of the wood, papered over and then put into the hands of the artist to make it by his process of "oak-graining" as unlike oak as the basilica of St. Mark is unlike Westminster Abbey!

But for a large garden where everything is on a heroic scale, the only suitable pergola is one made up of high brick or stone piers, with massive oak beams for the roof. Such a structure will last for a century or two, improving year by year. The only question to consider is the proper proportions that it should assume—the relations of the length to the breadth and to the height. On such points I dare not speak. The architect who has had experience of such structures must be consulted. I have seen some that have been carried out without reference to the profession, and to my mind their proportions were not right. One had the semblance of being stunted, another was certainly not sufficiently broad by at least two feet.

In this connection I may be pardoned if I give it as my opinion that most pergolas suffer from lack of breadth. Six feet is the narrowest breadth possible for one that is eight feet high to the cross beams. I think that a pergola in England should be paved, not in that contemptible fashion, properly termed "crazy," but with either stone slabs or paving tiles; if one can afford to have the work done in panels, so much the better. In this way nothing looks better than small bricks set in herring-bone patterns. If one can afford a course of coloured bricks, so much

the better. The riotous gaiety of colour overhead should be responded to in some measure underfoot.

There is no reason against, but many strong reasons for, interrupting the lines of a long pergola by making a dome of open woodwork between the four middle columns of support—assuming that all the rest of the woodwork is straight—and creating a curved alcove with a seat between the two back supports, thus forming at very little extra expense, an additional bower to the others which will come into existence year by year in a garden that is properly looked after.

When I was a schoolboy I was brought by my deskmate to his father's place, and escorted round the grounds by his sister, for whom I cherished a passion that I hoped was not hopeless. This was while my friend was busy looking after the nets for the lawn tennis. There were three summer-houses in various parts of the somewhat extensive grounds, and in every one of them we came quite too suddenly upon a pair of quite too obvious lovers.

The sister cicerone hurried past each with averted eyes—after the first glance—and looked at me and smiled.

We were turning into another avenue after passing the third of these love-birds, when she stopped abruptly.

"We had better not go on any farther," said she.

"Oh, why not?" I cried.

"Well, there's another summer-house down there among the lilacs," she replied.

We stood there while she looked around, plainly in search of a route that should be less distracting. It was at this moment of indecision that I gazed at her. I thought that I had never seen her look so lovely. I felt myself trembling. I know that my eyes were fixed upon the ground—I could not have spoken the words if I had looked up to her —she was a good head and shoulder taller than I was:—

"Look here, Miss Fanny, there may be no one in the last of the summer-houses. Let us go there and sit—sit—the same as the others."

"Oh, no; I should be afraid," said she.

"Oh, I swear to you that you shall have no cause, Miss Fanny; I know what is due to the one you love; you will be quite safe—sacred."

"What do you know about the one I love?" she asked—and there was a smile in her voice.

"I know the one who loves you," I said warmly.

"I'm so glad," she cried. "I know that he is looking for me everywhere, and if he found us together in a summer-house he would be sure to kill you. Captain Tyson is a frightfully jealous man, and you are too nice a boy to be killed. Do you mind running round by the rhododendrons and telling Bob that he may wear my tennis shoes to-day? I got a new pair yesterday."

I went slowly toward the rhododendrons. When I got beyond their shelter I looked back.

I did not see her, but I saw the sprightly figure of a naval man crossing the grass toward where I

had left her, and I knew him to be Commander Tyson, R.N.

Their second son is Commander Tyson, R. N., to-day.

But from that hour I made up my mind that a properly designed garden should have at least five summer-houses.

I have just made my fifth.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH

I AM sure that the most peaceful part of our Garden of Peace is the Place of Roses. The place of roses in the time of roses is one bower. It grew out of the orchard ground which I had turned into a lawn in exchange for the grassy space which I had turned into the House Garden. The grass came very rapidly when I had grubbed up the roots of the old plums and cherries. But then we found that the stone-edged beds and the central fountain had not really taken possession, so to speak, of the House Garden. This had still the character of a lawn for all its bedding, and could not be mown in less than two hours.

And just as I was becoming impressed with this fact, a gentle general dealer came to me with the inquiry if a tall wooden pillar would be of any use to me. I could not tell him until I had seen it, and when I had seen it and bought it and had it conveyed home I could not tell him.

It was a fluted column of wood, nearly twenty feet high and two in diameter, with a base and a carved Corinthian capital—quite an imposing object, but, as usual, the people at the auction were so startled by having brought before them something to which

they were unaccustomed, they would not make a bid for it, and my dealer, who has brought me many an embarrassing treasure, got it for the ten shillings at which he had started it.

It lay on the grass where it had been left by the carters, giving to the landscape for a whole week the semblance of the place of the Parthenon or the Acropolis; but on the seventh day I clearly saw that one cannot possess a white elephant without making some sacrifices for that distinction, and I resolved to sacrifice the new lawn to my hasty purchase. There are few things in the world dearer than a bargain, and none more irresistible. But, as it turned out, this was altogether an exceptional thing—as a matter of fact, all my bargains are. I made it stand in the centre of the lawn and I saw the place transformed.

It occupied no more than a patch less than a yard in diameter; but it dominated the whole neighbourhood. On one side of the place there is a range of shrubs on a small mound, making people who stand by the new pond of water-lilies believe that they have come to the bottom of the garden; on another side is the old Saxon earthwork, now turned into an expanse of things herbaceous, with a long curved grass path under the ancient castle walls; down the full length of the third side runs a pergola, giving no one a glimpse of a great breadth of rose-beds or of the colonnade beyond, where the sweet-briers have their own way.

There was no reason that I could see (now that I had set my heart on the scheme) why I should not

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set up a gigantic rose pillar in the centre of the lawn and see what would happen.

What actually did happen before another year had passed was the erecting of a tall pillar which looked so lonely in the midst of the grass—a lighthouse marking a shoal in a green sea—that I made four large round beds about it, at a distance of about twenty feet, and set up a nine-foot pillar in the centre of each, planting climbing roses of various sorts around it, hoping that in due time the whole should be incorporated and form a ring o' roses about the towering centre column.

It really took no more than two years to bring to fruition my most sanguine hopes, and now there are four rose-tents with hundreds of prolific shoots above the apex of each, clinging with eager fingers to the wires which I have brought to them from the top of the central pillar, and threatening in time to form a complete canopy between forty and fifty feet in diameter.

In the shade of these ambitious things one sits in what I say is the most peaceful part of the whole place of peace. Even "winter and rough weather" may be regarded with complacency from the well-sheltered seats; and every year toward the end of November Rosamund brings into the house some big sprays of ramblers and asks her mother if there is any boracic lint handy. He jests at scars who never felt an Ards Rover scrape down his arm in resisting lawful arrest. But in July and August, looking down upon the growing canopy from the grass walk above the her-

baceous terrace, is like realising Byron's awful longing for all the rosy lips of all the rosy girls in the world to " become one mouth " in order that he might " kiss them all at once from North to South." There they are, thousands and tens of thousands of rosy mouths; but not for kisses, even separately. Heywood, who, being a painter, is a thoroughly trustworthy consultant on all artistic matters, assures me that Byron was a fool, and that his longing for a unification of a million moments of æsthetic delight was unworthy of his reputation. There may be something in this. I am content to look down upon our eager roses with no more of a longing than that September were as far off as Christmas.

It was our antiquarian neighbour who, walking on the terrace one day in mid-July, told us of a beautiful poem which he had just seen in the customary corner of the *Gazette*—the full name of the paper is *The Yardley Gazette, East Longworth Chronicle, and Nethershire Observer,* but one would no more think of giving it all its titles in ordinary conversation than of giving the Duke of Wellington all his. It is with us as much the *Gazette* as if no other Gazette had ever been published. But it prints a copy of verses, ancient or modern, every week, and our friend had got hold of a gem. The roses reminded him of it. He could only recollect the first two lines, but they were striking:—

" There's a bower of rose by Bendameer's stream
And the nightingale sings in it all the night long."

Bendameer was some place in China, he thought, or perhaps Japan—but for the matter of that it might not be a real locality, but merely a place invented by the poet. Anyhow, he would in future call the terrace walk Bendameer, for could any one imagine a finer bower of roses than that beneath us? He did not believe that Bendameer could beat it.

If our friend had talked to Sir Foster Fraser—the only person I ever met who had been to Bendameer's stream—he might have expressed his belief much more enthusiastically. On returning from his bicycle tour round the world, and somewhat disillusioned by the East, ready to affirm that fifty years of Europe were better than a cycle in Cathay, he told me that Bendameer's stream was a complete fraud. It was nothing but a muddy puddle oozing its way through an uninteresting district.

In accordance with our rule, neither Dorothy nor I went further than to confess that the lines were very sweet.

"I'll get you a copy with pleasure," he cried. "I knew you would like them, you are both so literary; and you know how literary I am myself—I cut out all the poems that appear in the *Gazette*. It's a hobby, and elevating. I suppose you don't think it possible to combine antiquarian tastes and poetical." Dorothy assured him that she could see a distinct connection between the two; and he went on: "There was another about roses the week before. The editor is clearly a man of taste, and he puts in only things that are appropriate to the season. The other one

was about a garden—quite pretty, only perhaps a little vague. I could not quite make out what it meant at places; but I intend to get it off by heart, so I wrote it down in my pocket-book. Here it is:—

"Rosy is the north,
Rosy is the south,
Rosy are her cheeks
And a rose her mouth."

Now what do you think of it? I call it very pretty—not so good, on the whole, as the bower of roses by Bendameer's stream, but still quite nice. You would not be afraid to let one of your little girls read it—yes, every line."

Dorothy said that she would not; but then Dorothy is afraid of nothing—not even an antiquarian.

He returned to us the next day with the full text—only embellished with half a dozen of the *Gazette's* misprints—of the *Lalla Rookh* song, and read it out to us in full, but failing now and again to get into the lilt of Moore's melodious anapæsts—a marvellous feat, considering how they sing and swing themselves along from line to line. But that was not enough. He had another story for us—fresh, quite fresh, from the stock of a brother antiquarian who recollected it, he said, when watching the players on the bowling-green.

"I thought I should not lose a minute in coming to you with it," he said. "You are so close to the bowling-green here, it should have additional interest in your eyes. The story is that Nelson was playing

bowls when some one rushed in to say that the Spanish Armada was in sight. But the news did not put him off his game. 'We'll have plenty of time to finish our game and beat the Spaniards afterwards,' he cried; and sure enough he went on with the game to the end. There was a man for you!"

"And who won?" asked Dorothy innocently.

"That's just the question I put to my friend," he cried. "The story is plainly unfinished. He did not say whether Nelson and his partner won his game against the other players; but you may be sure that he did."

"He didn't say who was Nelson's partner?" said Dorothy.

"No, I have told you all that he told me," he replied.

"I shouldn't be surprised to hear that his partner was a man named Drake," said I. "A senior partner too in that transaction and others. But the story is a capital one and shows the Englishman as he is to-day. Why, it was only the year before the war that there was a verse going about,—

'I was playing golf one day
When the Germans landed;
All our men had run away,
All our ships were stranded.
And the thought of England's shame
Almost put me off my game.'"

Our antiquarian friend looked puzzled for some time; then he shook his head gravely, saying:—

"I don't like that. It's a gross libel upon our brave men—and on our noble sailors too: I heard some one say in a speech the other day that there are no better seamen in the world than are in the British Navy. Our soldiers did not run away, and all our ships were not stranded. It was one of the German lies to say so. And what I say is that it was very lucky for the man who wrote that verse that there was a British fleet to prevent the Germans landing. They never did succeed in landing, I'm sure, though I was talking to a man who had it on good authority that there were five U-boats beginning to disembark some crack regiments of Hun cavalry when a British man-o'-war—one, mind you—a single ship—came in sight, and they all bundled back to their blessed U-boats in double quick time."

"I think you told me about that before," said I—and he had. "It was the same person who brought the first news of the Russian troops going through England—he had seen them on the platform of Crewe stamping off the snow they had brought on their boots from Archangel; and afterwards he had been talking with a soldier who had seen the angels at Mons, and had been ordered home to be one of the shooting party at the Tower of London, when Prince Louis was court-martialled and sentenced."

"Quite true," he cried. "My God! what an experience for any one man to go through. But we are living in extraordinary times—that's what I've never shrunk from saying, no matter who was present—extraordinary times."

I could not but agree with him. I did not say that what I thought the most extraordinary feature of the times was the extraordinary credulity of so many people. The story of the Mons angels was perhaps the most remarkable of all the series. A journalist sitting in his office in London simply introduced in a newspaper article the metaphor of a host of angels holding up the advancing Germans, and within a week scores of people in England had talked with soldiers who had seen those imaginary angels and were ready to give a poulterer's description of them, as Sheridan said some one would do if he introduced the Phœnix into his Drury Lane Address.

It was no use the journalist explaining that his angels were purely imaginary ones; people said, when you pointed this out to them:—

"That may be so; but these were the angels he imagined."

Clergymen preached beautiful sermons on the angel host; and I heard of a man who sold for half a crown a feather which had dropped from the wing of one of the angels who had come on duty before he had quite got over his moult.

When Dorothy heard this she said she was sure that it was no British soldier who had shown the white feather in France during that awful time.

"If they were imaginary angels, the white feather must have been imaginary too," said Olive, the practical one.

"One of the earliest of angel observers was an ass, and the tradition has been carefully adhered to ever

since," said Friswell, and after that there was, of course, no use talking further.

But when we were still laughing over our antiquarian and his novelties in the form of verse and anecdote, Friswell himself appeared with a newspaper in his hand, and he too was laughing.

It was over the touching letter of an actress to her errant husband, entreating him to return and all would be forgiven. I had read it and smiled; so had Dorothy, and wept.

But it really was a beautiful letter, and I said so to Friswell.

"It is the most beautiful of the four actresses' letters to errant spouses for Divorce Court purposes that I have read within the past few months," said he. "But they are all beautiful—all touching. It makes one almost ready to condone the sin that results in such an addition to the literature of the Law Courts. I wonder who is the best person to go to for such a letter—some men must make a speciality of that sort of work to meet the demands of the time. But wouldn't it be dreadful if the errant husband became so convicted of his trespass through reading the wife's appeal to return, that he burst into tears, called a taxi and drove home! But these Divorce Court pleading letters are of great value professionally—they have quite blanketed the old lost jewel-case stunt as a draw. I was present and assisted in the reception given by the audience to the lady whose beautiful letter had appeared in the paper in the morning. She was overwhelmed. She had made

up pale in view of that reception; and there was something in her throat that prevented her from going on with her words for some time. The 'poor things!' that one heard on all sides showed how truly sympathetic is a British audience."

"I refuse to listen to your cynicism," cried Dorothy; "I prefer to believe that people are good rather than bad."

"And so do I, my dear lady," said he, laughing. "But don't you see that if you prefer to think good of all people, you cannot exclude the poor husband of the complete letter-writer, and if you believe good of him and not bad, you must believe that his charming wife is behaving badly in trying to get a divorce."

"She doesn't want a divorce: she wants him to come back to her and writes to him begging him to do so," said she.

"And such a touching letter too," I added.

"I have always found 'the profession,' as they call themselves, more touchy than touching," said he. "But I admit that I never was so touched as when, at the funeral of a brother artist, the leading actor of that day walked behind the coffin with the broken-hearted widow of the deceased on his right arm and the broken-hearted mistress on the left. Talk of stage pathos!"

"For my part, I shall do nothing of the sort," said I sharply. "I think, Friswell, that you sometimes forget that it was you who gave this place the name of A Garden of Peace. You introduce controversial topics—The Actor is the title of one of these, The

Actress is the title of the other. Let us have done with them, and talk poetry instead."

"Lord of the Garden of Peace! as if poetry was the antithesis of polemics—verses of controversies!" cried he. "Never mind! give us a poem—of The Peace."

"I wish I could," said I. "The two copies of verses which, as you know, without having read them, I contributed to the literature—I mean the writings—in connection with the war could scarcely be called pacific."

"They were quite an effective medium for getting rid of his superfluous steam," said Dorothy to him. "I made no attempt to prevent his writing them."

"It would have been like sitting on the safety-valve, wouldn't it?" said he. "I think that literature would not have suffered materially if a good number of safety-valves had been sat upon by stouter wives of metre-engineers than you will ever be, O guardian lady of the Garden of Peace! The poets of the present hour have got much to recommend them to the kindly notice of readers of taste, but they have all fallen short of the true war note on their bugles. Perhaps when they begin to pipe of peace they will show themselves better masters of the reed than of the conch."

"Whatever some of them may be——" I began, when he broke in.

"Say some of *us,* my friend: you can't dissociate yourself from your pals in the dock: you will be sentenced *en bloc,* believe me."

"Well, whatever *we* may be we make a better show than the Marlborough Muses or the Wellington or the Nelson Muses did. What would be thought of *The Campaign* if it were to appear to-morrow, I wonder. But it did more in advancing the interests of Addison than the complete *Spectator*."

"Yes, although some feeble folk did consider that one bit of it was verging on the blasphemous—that about riding on the whirlwind and directing the storm," remarked Friswell; he had a good memory for things verging on the blasphemous.

"The best war poem is the one that puts into literary form the man in the street yelling 'hurrah!'" said I. "If the shout is not spontaneous, it sounds stilted and it is worthless."

"I believe you," said Friswell. "If your verse does not find an echo in the heart of the rabble that run after a soldiers' band, it is but as the sounding brass and tinkling cymbals that crash on the empty air. But touching the poets of past campaigns——"

"I was thinking of Scott's *Waterloo*," said I; "yes, and Byron's stanzas in *Childe Harold*, and somebody's *'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay, We saw the Frenchmen lay*—'the Frenchmen lay,' mind you—that's the most popular of all the lays, thanks to Braham's music and Braham's tenor that gave it a start. I think we have done better than any of those."

"But have you done better than *Scot's wha' hae wi' Wallace bled?* or *Of Nelson and the North, Sing the glorious day's renown?* or *Ye Mariners of England, That guard our native seas?* or *Not a drum*

was heard or a funeral note?—I doubt it. And to come down to a later period, what about the lilt of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, by one Tennyson? Will any of the poems of 1914 show the same vitality as these?"

"The vital test of poetry is not its vitality," said I, "any more than being a best-seller is a test of a good novel. But I think that when a winnowing of the recent harvest takes place in a year or two, when we become more critical than is possible for a people just emerging from the flames that make us all see red, you will find that the harvest of sound poetry will be a record one. We have still the roar of the thunderstorm in our ears; when an earthquake is just over is not the time for one to be asked to say whether the *Pathétique* or the *Moonlight* Sonata is the more exquisite."

"Perhaps," said Friswell doubtfully. "But I allow that you have 'jined your flats' better than Tennyson did. The unutterable vulgarity of that 'gallant six hunderd,' because it happened that 'some one had blundered,' instead of 'blundred,' will not be found in the Armageddon band of buglers. But I don't believe that anything so finished as Wolfe's *Burial of Sir John Moore* will come to the surface of the melting-pot—I think that the melting-pot suggests more than your harvest. Your harvest hints at the swords being turned into ploughshares; my melting-pot at the bugles being thrown into the crucible. What have you to say about 'Not a drum was heard'?"

"That poem is the finest elegy ever written," said I definitely. "The author, James Wolfe, occupies the place among elegists that single-speech Hamilton does among orators, or Liddell and Scott in a library of humour. From the first line to the last, no false note is sounded in that magnificent funeral march. It is one grand monotone throughout. It cannot be spoken except in a low monotone. It never rises and it never falls until the last line is reached, 'We left him alone in his glory.'"

"And the strangest thing about it is that it appeared first in the poets' corner of a wretched little Irish newspaper—the *Newry Telegraph,* I believe it was called," said Dorothy—it was Dorothy's reading of the poem that first impressed me with its beauty.

"The more obscure the crypt in which its body was buried, the more—the more—I can't just express the idea that I'm groping after," said Friswell.

"I should like to help you," said Dorothy. "Strike a match for me, and I'll try to follow you out of the gloom."

"It's something like this: the poem itself seems to lead you into the gloom of a tomb, so that there is nothing incongruous in its disappearing into the obscurity of a corner of a wretched rag of a newspaper—queer impression for any one to have about such a thing, isn't it?"

"Queer, but—well, it was but the body that was buried, the soul of the poetry could not be consigned to the sepulchre, even though 'Resurgam' was cut upon the stone."

"You have strolled away from me," said I. "All that I was thinking about Wolfe and that blessed *Newry Telegraph,* was expressed quite adequately by the writer of another Elegy:—

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

That was a trite reflection; and as apposite as yours, Friswell; unless you go on to assume that through the desert air there buzzed a bee to carry off the soul of the blushing flower and cause it to fertilise a whole garden, so that the desert was made to blossom like the rose."

"Who was the bee that rescued the poem from the desert sheet that enshrouded it?" asked Dorothy.

"I have never heard," I said, nor had Friswell.

There was a long pause before he gave a laugh, saying,—

"I wonder if you will kick me out of your garden when I tell you the funny analogy to all this that the mention of the word desert forced upon me."

"Try us," said I. "We know you."

"The thought that I had was that there are more busy bees at work than one would suppose; and the mention of the desert recalled to my mind what I read somewhere of the remarkable optimism of a flea which a man found on his foot after crossing the desert of the Sahara. It had lived on in the sand, goodness

knows how long, on the chance of some animal passing within the radius of a leap and so carrying it back to a congenial and not too rasorial a civilisation. How many thousand mllion chances to one there were that it should not be rescued; yet its chance came at last."

"Meaning?"

"Well, my flea is your bee, and where there are no bees there may be plenty of fleas."

"Yes; only my bee comes with healing in its wings, and your flea is the bearer of disease," said I; and I knew that I had got the better of him there, though I was not so sure that he knew it.

Friswell is a queer mixture.

After another pause, he said,—

"By the way, the mention of Campbell and his group brought back to me one of the most popular of the poems of the period—*Lord Ullin's Daughter*. You recollect it, of course."

"A line or two."

"Well, it begins, you know:—

> "A chieftain to the Highlands bound,
> Cries, 'Boatman, do not tarry,
> And I'll give thee a silver pound,
> To row us o'er the ferry.'

Now, for long I felt that it was too great a strain upon our credulity to ask us to accept the statement that a Scotsman would offer a ferryman a pound for a job of the market value of a bawbee; but all at once the truth flashed upon me: the pound was a pound

Scots, or one shilling and eightpence of our money. You see?"

"Yes, I see," said Dorothy; "but still it sounds extravagant. A Highland Chief—one and eightpence! The ferryman never would have got it."

I fancied that we had exhausted some of the most vital questions bearing upon the questionable poetry of the present and the unquestionable poetry of the past; but I was mistaken; for after dinner I had a visit from Mr. Gilbert.

But I must give Mr. Gilbert a little chapter to himself.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST

Of course I had known for a long time that Mr. Gilbert was "quite a superior man"—that was the phrase in which the Rural Dean referred to him when recommending me to apply to him for information respecting a recalcitrant orchid which had refused one year to do what it had been doing the year before. He was indeed "quite a superior man," but being a florist he could never be superior to his business. No man can be superior to a florist, when the florist is an orchidtect as well. I went to Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Gilbert came to me, and all was right. That was long ago. We talked orchids all through that year and then, by way of lightening our theme, we began to talk of roses and such like frivolities, but everything he said was said in perfect taste. Though naturally, living his life on terms of absolute intimacy with orchids, he could not regard roses seriously, yet I never heard him say a disrespectful word about them: he gave me to understand that he regarded the majority of rosarians as quite harmless—they had their hobby, and why should they not indulge in it, he asked. "After all, rosarians are God's creatures like the rest of us," he said, with a tolerant smile. And I must confess that, for all my knowledge of his

being a superior man, he startled me a little by adding,—

"The orchid is epic and the rose lyric, sir; but every one knows how an incidental lyric lightens up the hundred pages of an epic. Oh, yes, roses have their place in a properly organised horticultural scheme."

"I believe you are right, now that I come to look at the matter in that light," said I. "You find a relaxation in reading poetry?" I added.

"I have made a point of reading some verses every night for the past twenty-five years, sir," he replied. "I find that's the only way by which I can keep myself up to the mark."

"I can quite understand that," said I. "Flowers are the lyrics that, as you say, lighten the great epic of Creation. Where would our poets be without their flowers?"

"They make their first appeal to the poet, sir; but the worst of it is that every one who can string together a few lines about a flower believes himself to be a poet. No class of men have treated flowers worse than our poets—even the best of them are so vague in their references to flowers as to irritate me."

"In what way, Mr. Gilbert?"

"Well, you know, sir, they will never tell us plainly just what they are driving at. For instance —we were speaking of roses, just now—well, we have roses and roses by the score in poems; but how seldom do we find the roses specified! There's Matthew Arnold, for example; he wrote "Strew on her roses,

roses"; but he did not say whether he wanted her to be strewn with hybrid teas, Wichuraianas, or polyanthas. He does not even suggest the colour. Now, could anything be more vague? It makes one believe that he was quite indifferent on the point, which would, of course, be doing him a great injustice: all these funeral orders are specified, down to the last violets and Stephanotis. Then we have, "It was the time of roses"—now, there's another ridiculously vague phrase. Why could the poet not have said whether he had in his mind the ordinary brier or an autumn-flowering William Allen Richardson or a Gloire de Dijon? But that is not nearly so irritating as Tennyson is in places. You remember his "Flower in the crannied wall." There he leaves a reader in doubt as to what the plant really was. If it was *Saracha Hapelioides,* he should have called it a herb, or if it was simply the ordinary *Scolopendrium marginatum* he should have called it a fern. If it was one of the *Saxifrageæ* he left his readers quite a bewildering choice. My own impression is that it belonged to the *Evaizoonia* section—probably the *Aizoon sempervivoides,* though it really might have been the *cartilaginea.* Why should we be left to puzzle over the thing? But for that matter, both Shakespeare and Milton are most flagrant offenders, though I acknowledge that the former now and again specifies his roses: the musk and damask were his favourites. But why should he not say whether it was *Thymus Serpyllum* or *atropurpureus* he alluded to on that bank? He merely says, "Whereon the

wild thyme blows." It is really that vagueness, that absence of simplicity—which has made poetry so unpopular. Then think of the trouble it must be to a foreigner when he comes upon a line comparing a maiden to a lily, without saying what particular *lilium* is meant. An Indian squaw is like a lily—*lilium Brownii;* a Japanese may appropriately be said to be like the *lilium sulphureum.* Recovering from a severe attack of measles a young woman suggests *lilium speciosum;* but that is just the moment when she makes a poor appeal to a poet. To say that a maiden is like a lily conveys nothing definite to the mind; but that sort of neutrality is preferable to the creation of a false impression, so doing her a great injustice by suggesting it may be that her complexion is a bright orange picked out with spots of purple."

That was what our Mr. Gilbert said to me more than a year ago; and now he comes to me before I have quite recovered from the effects of that discussion with Friswell, and after a few professional remarks respecting a new orchid acquisition, begins: "Might I take the liberty of reading you a little thing which I wrote last night as an experiment in the direction of the reform I advocated a year ago when referring to the vagueness of poets' flowers? I don't say that the verses have any poetical merit; but I claim for them a definiteness and a lucidity that should appeal to all readers who, like myself, are tired of the slovenly and loose way in which poets drag flowers into their compositions."

I assured him that nothing would give me greater

pleasure than to hear his poem; and he thanked me and said that the title was, *The Florist to his Bride.*

This was his poem:—

Do you remember, dearest, that wild eve,
When March came blustering o'er the land?
We stood together, hand in hand,
Watching the slate-gray waters heave—
Hearing despairing boughs behind us grieve.

It seemed as if no forest voice was dumb.
All Nature joining in one cry;
The *Ampelopsis Veitchii,*
Giving gray hints of green to come,
Shrank o'er the leafless *Prunus Avium.*

Desolate seemed the grove of *Coniferia,*
Evergreen as deciduous;
Hopeless the hour seemed unto us;
Helpless our beauteous *Cryptomeria*—
Helpless in Winter's clutch our *Koelreuteria.*

We stood beneath our *Ulmus Gracilis,*
And watched the tempest-torn *Fitzroya,*
And shaken than the stout *Sequoia;*
And yet I knew in spite of this,
Your heart was hopeful of the Springtide's kiss.

Yours was the faith of woman, dearest child.
Your eyes—*Centaurea Cyanus*—
Saw what I saw not nigh to us,
And that, I knew, was why you smiled,
When the *Montana Pendula* swung wild.

I knew you smiled, thinking of suns to come,
Seeing in snowflakes on bare trees
Solanum Jasminoïdes—

Seeing ere Winter's voice was dumb,
The peeping pink *Mesembrianthium.*

I knew you saw as if they flowered before us,
The sweet *Rhodora Canadensis,*
The lush *Wistaria Sinensis,*
The *Lepsosiphon Densiflorus*—
All flowers that swell the Summer's colour-chorus.

And, lightened by your smile, I saw, my Alice,
The modest *Resida Odorata*—
Linaria Reticulata—
I drank the sweets of Summer's chalice,
Sparkling *Calendula Officinalis.*

To me your smile brought sunshine that gray day,
The saddest *Salex Babylonica*
Became *Anemone Japonica*
And the whole world beneath its ray,
Bloomed one *Escholtzia Californicæ.*

Still in thy smile the summer airs caress us;
And now with thee my faith is sure:
The love that binds us shall endure—
Nay, growing day by day to bless us,
Till o'er us waves *Supervirens Cupressus.*

"I hope I haven't bored you, sir. I don't pretend to be a poet; but you see what my aim is, I'm sure—lucidity and accuracy—strict accuracy, sir. Something that every one can understand."

I assured him that he had convinced me that he understood his business: he was incomparable—as a florist.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND

Among the features of our gardens for which I am not responsible, is the grass walk alongside the Castle Wall, where it descends on one side, by the remains of the terraces of the Duke's hanging gardens, fifty feet into the original fosse, while on the other it breasts the ancient Saxon earthwork, which reduces its height to something under fifteen, so that the wall on our side is quite a low one, but happily of a breadth that allows of a growth of wild things—lilacs and veronicas and the like—in beautiful luxuriance, while the face is in itself a garden of crevices where the wallflowers last long enough to mix with the snapdragons and scores of modest hyssops and mosses and ferns that lurk in every cranny.

Was it beneath such a wall that Tennyson stood to wonder how he should fulfil the commission he had received from *Good Words*—or was it *Once a Week?* —for any sort of poem that would serve as an advertisement of magazine enterprise, and he wrote that gem to which Mr. Gilbert had referred?—

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies;
> Hold you here, stem and all in my hand.
> Little flower; but if I could understand

What you are, stem and all and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

I should like equal immortality to be conferred upon the parody which is of far greater merit than the original:—

'Terrier in my granny's hall,
I whistle you out of my granny's;
Hold you here, tail and all in my hand.
Little terrier; but if I could understand
What you are, tail and all and all in all,
I should know what black-and-tan is."

I could understand the inspiration that should result in sermons from stones—such as the poet's forgetting that his mission was not that of the sermonising missionary, but of the singer of such creations of beauty as offer themselves to nestle to the heart of man—when walking round the gracious curve that the grass path makes till it is arrested by the break in the wall where the postern gate once hung, guarded by the sentinel whose feet must have paced this grass path until no blade of grass remained on it.

Early every summer the glory of the snapdragons and the wallflowers is overwhelmed for a time by the blossom of the pear-trees and the plums which spread themselves abroad and sprawl even over the top of the wall. By their aid the place is transformed for a whole month in a fruitful year. In 1917 it was as if a terrific snowstorm had visited us. It was with us as with all our neighbours, a wonderful year for

A STONE SEAT

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pears, apples, and plums. Pink and white and white and pink hid the world and all that appertained to it from our eyes, and when the blossoms were shed we were afraid to set a foot upon the grass path: it would have been a profanity to crush that delicate embroidery. It seemed as if Nature had flung down her copious mantle of fair white satin before our feet; but we bowed our heads conscious of our unworthiness and stood motionless in front of that exquisite carpeting.

And then day after day the lovely things of the wall that had been hidden asserted themselves, and a soft wind swept the path till all the green of the new grass path flowed away at our feet, and Nature seemed less virginal. Then came the babes—revealed by the fallen blossoms—plump little cherubic faces of apples, graver little papooses of the russet Indian tint, which were pears, and smaller shy things peeping out from among the side shoots, which we could hardly recognise as plums; rather a carcanet of chrysoprase they seemed, so delicately green in their early days, before each of them became like the ripe Oriental beauty, the *nigra sed formosa,* of the Song of Solomon, and for the same reason: "Because the sun hath looked upon me," she cried. When the sun had looked upon the fruit that clustered round the clefts in our wall, he was as one of the sons of God who had become aware for the first time of the fact that the daughters of men were fair; and the whole aspect of the world was changed.

Is there any part of a garden that is more beau-

tiful than the orchard? At every season it is lovely. I cannot understand how it is that the place for fruit-growing is in so many gardens kept away from what is called the ornamental part. I cannot understand how it has come about that flowering shrubs are welcomed and flowering apples discouraged in the most favoured situations. When a considerable number of the former have lost their blossoms, they are for the rest of the year as commonplace as is possible for a tree to be; but when the apple-blossom has gone, the boughs that were pink take on a new lease of beauty, and the mellow glory of the season of fruitage lasts for months. The berry of the gorse which is sometimes called a gooseberry, is banished like a Northumberland cow-pincher of the romantic period, beyond the border; but a well furnished gooseberry bush is as worthy of admiration as anything that grows in the best of the borders, whether the fruit is green or red. And then look at the fruit of the white currant if you give it a place where the sun can shine through it—clusters shining with the soft light of the Pleiades or the more diffuse Cassiopea; and the red currants —well, I suppose they are like clusters of rubies; but everything that is red is said to be like a ruby; why not talk of the red currant bush as a firmament that holds a thousand round fragments of a fractured Mars?

There was a time in England when a garden meant a place of fruit rather than flowers, but by some freak of fashion it was decreed that anything that appealed to the sense of taste was "not in good taste"—that

was how the warrant for the banishment of so much beauty was worded—" not in good taste." I think that the decree is so closely in harmony with the other pronouncements of the era of *mauvaise honte*—the era of affectations—when the " young lady " was languid and insipid—" of dwarf habit," as the catalogues describe such a growth, and was never allowed to be a girl—when fainting was esteemed one of the highest accomplishments of the sex, and everything that was natural was pronounced gross—when the sampler, the sandal, and the simper were the outward and visible signs of an inward and affected femininity: *visible?* oh, no; the sandal was supposed to be invisible; if it once appeared even to the extent of a taper toe, and attention was called to its obtrusion, there was a little shriek of horror, and the " young lady " was looked at askance as *demie-vièrge.* It was so much in keeping with the rest of the parcel to look on something that could be eaten as something too gross to be constantly in sight when growing naturally, that I think the banishment of the apple and the pear and the plum and the gooseberry to a distant part of the garden must be regarded as belonging to the same period. But now that the indelicacy of the super-delicacy of that era has passed —now that the shy sandal has given place to the well-developed calf above the " calf uppers " of utilitarian boots—now that a young man and a young woman (especially the young woman) discuss naturally the question of eugenics and marriage with that freedom which once was the sole prerogative of the prayer-

book, may we not claim an enlargement of our borders to allow of the rehabilitation of the apple and the repatriation of the pear in a part of the garden where all can enjoy their decorative qualities and anticipate their gastronomic without reproach? Let us give the fruit its desserts and it will return the compliment.

The Saxon earthwork below the grass walk is given over to what is technically termed "the herbaceous border," and over one thousand eight hundred square feet there should be such a succession of flowers growing just as they please, as should delight the heart of a democracy. The herbaceous border is the democratic section of a garden. The autocrat of the Dutch and the Formal gardens is not allowed to carry out any of his foul designs of clipping or curtailing the freedom of Flora in this province. There should be no reminiscences of the tyrant stake which in far-distant days of autocracy was a barrier to the freedom of growth, nor should the aristocracy of the hot-house or even the cool greenhouse obtrude its educated bloom among the lovers of liberty. They must be allowed to do as they damplease, which is a good step beyond the ordinary doing as they please. The government of the herbaceous border is one whose aim is the glorification of the Mass as opposed to the Individual.

It is not at all a bad principle—for a garden—this principle which can best be carried out by the unprincipled. English democracy includes princes and principles; but there is a species which will have noth-

ing to do with principles because they reckon them corrupted by their first syllable, and hold that the aristocrat is like Hamlet's stepfather, whose offence was "*rank* and smells to heaven." I have noticed, however, in the growth of my democratic border that there are invariably a few pushing and precipitate individuals who insist on having their own way—it is contrary to the spirit of Freedom to check them—and the result is that the harmony of the whole ceases to exist. But there are some people who would prefer a Bolshevist wilderness to any garden.

I have had some experience of Herbaceous Borders of mankind. . . .

The beauty of the border is to be found in the masses, we are told in the Guides to Gardening. We should not allow the blues to mix with the buffs, and the orange element should not assert its ascendancy over the green. But what is the use of laying down hard and fast rules here when the essence of the constitution of the system is No Rule. My experience leads me to believe that without a rule of life and a firm ruler, this portion of the garden will become in the course of time allied to the prairie or the wilderness, and the hue that will prevail to the destruction of any governing scheme of colour or colourable scheme of government will be Red.

Which things are an allegory, culled from a garden of herbs, which, as we have been told, will furnish a dinner preferable to one that has for its *pièce de résistance* the stalled ox, providing that it is partaken of under certain conditions rigidly defined.

We have never been able to bring our herbaceous border to the point of perfection which we are assured by some of those optimists who compile nurserymen's catalogues, it should reach. We have massed our colours and nailed them to the mast, so to speak—that is, we have not surrendered our colour schemes because we happen to fall short of victory; but still we must acknowledge that the whole border has never been the success that we hoped it would be. Perhaps we have been too exacting—expecting over much; or it may be that our standard was too Royal a one for the soil; but the facts remain and we have a sense of disappointment.

It seems to me that this very popular feature depends too greatly upon the character of the season to be truly successful as regards *ensemble*. Our border includes many subjects which have ideas of their own as regards the weather. A dry spring season may stunt (in its English sense) the growth of some flowers that occupy a considerable space, and are meant to play an important part in the design; whereas the same influence may develop a stunt (in the American sense) in a number of others, thereby bringing about a dislocation of the whole scheme. Then some things will rush ahead and override their neighbours—some that lasted in good condition up to the October of one year look shabby before the end of July the next. One season differs from another on vital points and the herbs differ in their growth —I had almost written their habit—in accordance with the differences of the season. We have had a

fine show in one place and a shabby show next door; we have had a splendid iris season and a wretched peony season—bare patches beside luxuriant patches. The gailardias have broken out of bounds one summer, and when we left "ample verge and room enough" for them the next, they turned sulky, and the result was a wide space of soil on which a score of those *gamins* of the garden, chickweed and dandelion, promptly began operations, backed up by those *apaches* of a civilised borderland, the ragged robin, and we had to be strenuous in our surveillance of the place, fearful that a riot might ruin all that we had taken pains to bring to perfection. So it has been season after season—one part quite beautiful, a second only middling, and a third utterly unresponsive. That is why we have taken to calling it the facetious border.

Our experience leads us to look on this facetious herbaceous border as the parson's daughter looks on the Sunday School—as a place for the development of all that is tricky in Nature, with here and there a bunch of clean collars and tidy trimmings—something worth carrying on over, but not to wax enthusiastic over. So we mean to carry on, and take Flora's "buffets and awards" "with equal thanks." We shall endeavour to make our unruly tract in some measure tractable; and, after all, where is the joy of gardening apart from the trying? It was a great philosopher who affirmed at the close of a long life, that if he were starting his career anew and the choice were offered to him between the Truth and the Pur-

suit of Truth, he would certainly choose the latter. That man had the true gardening spirit.

Any one who enters a garden without feeling that he is entering a big household of children, should stay outside and make a friend of the angel who was set at the gate of the first Paradise with a flaming sword, which I take it was a gladiolus—the gladiolus is the *gladius* of flowerland—to keep fools on the outside. The angel and the proper man will get on very well together at the garden gate, talking of things that are within the scope of the intelligence of angels and men who think doormats represent Nature in that they are made of cocoa-nut fibre. We have long ago come to look on the garden as a region of living things—shouting children, riotous children, sulky children; children who are rebellious, perverse, impatient at restriction, bad-tempered, quarrelsome, but ever ready to "make it up," and fling themselves into your arms and give you a chance of sharing with them the true joy of life which is theirs.

This is what a garden of flowers means to any one who enters it in a proper spirit of comradeship, and not in the attitude of a School Inspector. We go into the garden not to educate the flowers, but to be beloved by them—to make companions of them and, if they will allow us, to share some of the secrets they guard so jealously until they find some one whom they feel they can trust implicitly. A garden is like the object of Dryden's satire, "Not one, but all mankind's epitome," and a knowledge of men that makes a man a sympathetic gardener. I think that Christ

THE HERBACEOUS TERRACE

was as fond of gardens as God ever was. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

There is the glorious charter of the garden, the truth of which none can dispute—there is the revelation of the spirit of the garden delivered to men by the wisest and the most sympathetic garden-lover that ever sought a Gethsemane for communion with the Father of all, in an hour of trial.

I wonder what stores of knowledge of plant-life existed among the wise Orientals long ago. Were they aware of all that we suppose has only been revealed to us—"discovered" by us within recent years? Did they know that there is no dividing line between the various elements of life—between man, who is the head of "the brute creation," and the creatures of what the books of my young days styled "the Vegetable Kingdom"? Did they know that it is possible for a tree to have a deeper love for its mate than a man has for the wife whom he cherishes? I made the acquaintance some years ago of an Eastern tree which was brought away from his family in the forest and, though placed in congenial soil, remained for years making no advance in growth—living, but nothing more—until one day a thoughtful man who had spent years studying plants of the East, brought a female companion to that tree, and had the satisfaction of seeing "him" assume a growth which was maintained year by year alongside "her," until they

were both shown to me rejoicing together, the one vieing with the other in luxuriance of foliage and fruit. Every one who has grown apples or plums has had the same experience. We all know now of the courtship and the love and the marriage of things in "the Vegetable Kingdom," and we know that there is no difference in the process of that love which means life in "the Animal Kingdom" and "the Vegetable Kingdom." In some directions their "human" feelings and emotions and passions have been made plain to us; how much more we shall learn it is impossible to tell; but we know enough to save us from the error of fancying that they have a different existence from ours, and every day that one spends in a garden makes us ready to echo Shelley's lyrical shout of "Beloved Brotherhood!"

That is what I feel when I am made the victim of some of the pranks of the gay creatures of the herbaceous border, who amuse themselves at our expense, refusing to be bound down to our restrictions, to travel the way we think good plants should go, and declining to be guided by an intelligence which they know to be inferior to their own. The story of the wilful gourd which would insist on crossing a garden path in the direction it knew to be the right one, though a human intelligence tried to make it go in another, was told by an astonished naturalist in the pages of *Country Life* a short time ago. I hope it was widely read. The knowledge that such things can be will give many thousand readers access to a field of study and of that legitimate speculation which

is the result of study and observation. It will ever tend to mitigate the disappointment some of us may be inclined to harbour when we witness our floral failures, though it is questionable if the recognition of the fact that our failures are due to our own stupid bungling, will diminish the store of that self-conceit which long ago induced us to think of ourselves as the sole *raison d'être* of all Creation.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD

We were working at the young campanulas when our friend Heywood came upon us—Heywood, for whose intelligence we have so great a respect, because he so frequently agrees with our outlook upon the world of woman and other flowers cherished by us. Heywood is a good artist; but because he believes that Womankind is a kind woman indefinitely multiplied, he paints more faithful portraits of men than of women; he also paints landscapes that live more faithfully than the human features that he depicts and receives large sums for depicting. He is a student of children, and comes to Rosamund quite seriously for her criticism. She gives it unaffectedly, I am glad to notice; and without having to make use of a word of the School-of-Art phraseology.

We have an able surgeon (retired) living close to us here, and he is still so interested in the Science he practised—he retired from the practice, not from the science—that when he is made aware of an unusual operation about to be performed in any direction—London, Paris, or (not recently) Vienna, he goes off to witness the performance, just as we go to some of the most interesting *premières* in town. In the same spirit Heywood runs off every now and again to Paris

to see the latest production of his old master, or the acquisition of an old Master at one of the galleries. It lets him know what is going on in the world, he says, and I am sure he is quite right.

But, of course, Atheist Friswell has his smile—a solemn smile it is this time—while he says,—

"Old Masters? Young mississes rather, I think."

"Young what?" cried Dorothy.

"Mysteries," he replied. "What on earth do you think I said?"

"Another word with the same meaning," says she.

But these artistic excursions have nothing to do with us among our campanulas to-day. Heywood has been aware of a funny thing and came to make us laugh with him.

"Campanulas!" he cried. "And that is just what I came to tell you about—the campanile at St. Katherine's."

Yardley Parva, in common with Venice, Florence, and a number of other places, has a campanile, only it was not designed by Giotto or any other artist. Nor is it even called a campanile, but a bell-tower, and it belongs to the Church of St. Katherine-sub-Castro—a Norman church transformed by a few adroit touches here and there into the purest Gothic of the Restoration—the Gilbert Scott-Church-Restoration period.

But no one would complain with any measure of bitterness at the existence of the bell-tower only for the fact that there are bells within it, and these bells being eight, lend themselves to many feats of cam-

panology, worrying the inhabitants within a large area round about the low levels of the town. The peace of every Sabbath Day is rudely broken by the violence of what the patient folk with no *arrière pensée* term "them joy bells."

"You have not heard a sound of them for some Sundays," said Heywood.

"I have not complained," said I. "Ask Dorothy if I have."

"No one has, unless the bell-ringers, who are getting flabby through lack of exercise," said he. "But the reason you have not heard them is because they have been silent."

"'The British Fleet you cannot see, for it is not in sight,'" said I.

"And the reason that they have been silent was the serious illness of Mr. Livesay, whose house is close to St. Katherine's. Dr. Beecher prescribed complete repose for poor Livesay, and as the joy bells of St. Katherine's do not promote that condition, his wife sent a message to the ringers asking them to oblige by refraining from their customary uproar until the doctor should remove his ban. They did so two Sundays ago, and the Sunday before last they sent to inquire how the man was. He was a good deal worse, they were told, so they were cheated out of their exercise again. Yesterday, however, they rang merrily out—merrily."

"We heard," said Dorothy. "So I suppose Mr. Livesay is better."

"On the contrary, he is dead," said Heywood.

"He died late on Saturday night. My housekeeper, Mrs. Hartwell, had just brought me in my breakfast when the bells began. 'Listen,' she cried. 'Listen! the joy bells! Mr. Livesay must have died last night.'"

It was true. The bell-ringers had made their call at poor Livesay's house on Sunday morning, and on receiving the melancholy news, they hurried off to let their joy bells proclaim it far and wide.

But no one in Yardley Parva, lay or clerical, except Heywood and ourselves seemed to think that there was anything singular in the incident.

We had a few words to say, however, about joy bells spreading abroad the sad news of a decent man's death, and upon campanology in general.

But when Friswell heard of the affair, he said he did not think it more foolish than the usual practice of church bells.

"We all know, of course, that there is nothing frightens the devil like the ringing of bells," said he.

"That is quite plausible," said I. "Any one who doubts it must have lived all his life in a heathen place where there are no churches. Juan Fernandez, for example," I added, as a couple of lines sang through my recollection. "Cowper made his Alexander Selkirk long for 'the sound of the church-going bell.'"

"That was a good touch of Cowper's," said Friswell. "He knew that Alexander Selkirk was a Scotsman, and with much of the traditional sanctimoniousness of his people, when he found himself awfu' bad

or muckle bad or whatever the right phrase is, he was ready to propitiate heaven by a pious aspiration."

"Nothing of the sort," cried Dorothy. "He was quite sincere. Cowper knew that there is nothing that brings back recollections of childhood, which we always think was the happiest time of our life, like the chiming of church bells."

"I dare say you are right," said he, after a little pause. "But like many other people, poet Cowper did not think of the church bells except in regard to their secondary function of summoning people to the sacred precincts. He probably never knew that the original use of the bells was to scare away the Evil One. It was only when they found out that he had never any temptation to enter a church, that the authorities turned their devil-scaring bells to the summoning of the worshippers, and they have kept up the foolish practice ever since."

"Why foolish?" asked Dorothy quite affably. "You don't consider it foolish to ring a bell to go to dinner, and why should you think it so in the matter of going to church?"

"My dear creature, you don't keep ringing your dinner bell for half an hour, with an extra five minutes for the cook."

"No," said she quickly. "And why not? Because people don't need any urging to come to dinner, but they require a good deal to go to church, and then they don't go."

"There's something in that," said he. "Anyhow they've been ringing those summoning bells so long

that I'm sure they will go on with them until all the churches are turned into school-houses."

"And then there will be a passing-bell rung for the passing of the churches themselves—I suppose the origin of the passing-bell was the necessity to scare away the devil at the supreme moment," remarked Heywood.

"Undoubtedly it was," said Friswell. "The practice exists among many of those races that are still savage enough to believe in the devil—a good hand-made tom-tom does the business quite effectually, I've heard."

"Do you know, my dear Friswell, I think that when you sit down with us in our Garden of Peace, the conversation usually takes the form of the dialogue in *Magnall's Questions* or the *Child's Guide* or *Joyce's Science*. You are so full of promiscuous information which you cannot hide?"

He roared in laughter, and we all joined in.

"You have just said what my wife says to me daily," said he. "I'll try to repress myself in future."

"Don't try to do anything of the sort," cried Dorothy. "You never cease to be interesting, no matter how erudite you are."

"What I can't understand is, how he has escaped assassination all these years," remarked Heywood. "I think the time is coming when whoso slayeth Friswell will think that he doeth God's service. Just think all of you of the mental state of the man who fails to see that, however heathenish may be the prac-

tice of church-bell-ringing, the fact that it has brought into existence some of the most beautiful buildings in the world makes the world its debtor for evermore!"

"I take back all my words—I renounce the devil and all his work," cried the other man. "Yes, I hold that Giotto's Campanile justifies all the clashing and banging and hammering before and since. On the same analogy I believe with equal sincerity that the Temple of Jupiter fully justifies the oblations to the Father of gods, and the Mosque of Omar the massacres of Islam."

"Go on," said Dorothy. "Say that the sufferings of Alexander Selkirk were justified since without them we should not have *Robinson Crusoe.*"

"I will say anything you please, my Lady of the Garden," said he heartily. "I will say that the beauty of that border beside you justifies Wakeley's lavish advertisements of Hop Mixture."

I felt that this sort of thing had gone on long enough, so I made a hair-pin bend in the conversation by asking Dorothy if she remembered the day of our visit to Robinson Crusoe's island.

"I never knew that you had been to Juan Fernandez," said Friswell.

And then I saw how I could score off Friswell.

"I said Robinson Crusoe's island, not Alexander Selkirk's," I cried. "Alexander Selkirk's was Juan Fernandez, Robinson Crusoe's was Tobago in the West Indies, which Dorothy and I explored some years ago."

"Of course I should have remembered that," said
e. "I recollect now what a stumbling-block to me
ne geography of *Robinson Crusoe* was when I first
ead the book. A foolish explanatory preface to the
heap copy I read gave a garbled version of the story
f Selkirk and his island, and said no word about
Daniel Defoe having been wise enough to change
uan Fernandez for another."

"You were no worse than the writer of a para-
raph I read in one of the leading papers a short
me ago, relative to the sale of the will which Selkirk
ade in the year 1717—years after Captain Woodes
Lodgers had picked him up at the island where he
ad been marooned nearly four years before," said
Dorothy, who, I remembered, had laughed over the
rudition of the paragraph. "The writer affirmed
hat the will had been made before the man 'had
ailed unwittingly for Tristan d'Acunha'—those
ere his exact words, and this island he seemed to
lentify with Bishop Heber's, for he said it was
where every prospect pleases and only man is vile.'
What was in the poor man's mind was the fact that
ome one had written a poem about Alexander Sel-
rk, and he mixed Cowper up with Heber."

"You didn't write to the paper to put the fellow
ght," said Heywood.

"Good gracious, no!" cried Dorothy. "I knew
hat no one in these aeroplaning days would care
hether the island was Tristan d'Acunha or Juan
ernandez. Besides, there was too much astray in
ne paragraph for a simple woman to set about mak-

ing good. Anyhow the document fetched £60 at the sale."

"You remember the lesson that was learnt by the man who wrote to correct something a newspaper had written about him," said Heywood. "'The editor called me a swindler, a liar, and a politician,' said he, relating his experience, 'and like a fool I wrote to contradict it. I was a fool: for what did the fellow do in the very next issue but prove every statement that he had made!'"

"Oh, isn't it lucky that I didn't write to that paper?" cried Dorothy.

But when we began to talk of the imaginary sufferings of Robinson Crusoe, and to try to imagine what were the real sufferings of Selkirk, Friswell laughed, saying,—

"I'm pretty sure that what the bonnie Scots body suffered from most poignantly was the island not having any of his countrymen at hand, so that they could start a Burns Club or a Caledonian Society, as the six representatives of Scotland are about to do in our town of Yardley, which has hitherto been free from anything of that sort. Did you ever hear the story of Andrew Gareloch and Alec MacClackan?"

We assured him that we had never heard a word of it.

He told it to us, and this is what it amounted to:—

Messrs. Andrew Gareloch and Alec MacClackan were merchants of Shanghai who were unfortunate enough to be wrecked on their voyage home. They were the sole survivors of the ship's company, and

the desert island on which they found themselves was in the Pacific, only a few miles in circumference. In the lagoon were plenty of fish and on the ridge of the slope were plenty of cocoa-nuts. After a good meal they determined to name the place. They called it St. Andrew Lang Syne Island, and became as festive and brotherly—they pronounced it "britherly"—as was possible over cocoa-nut milk: it was a long time since either of them had tasted milk of any sort. The second day they founded a local Benevolent Society of St. Andrew, and held the inaugural dinner; the third day they founded a Burns Club, with a supper; the fourth day they starts a Scots Association, with a series of monthly reunions for the discussion of the Minstrelsy of the Border; the fifth day they laid out golf links with the finest bunkers in the world, and instituted a club lunch (strictly non-alcoholic); the sixth day they formed a Curling Club—the lagoon would make a braw rink, they said, if it only froze; and if it didn't freeze, well, they could still have an annual Curlers' Supper; the Seventh Day they *kept*. On the evening of the same day a vessel was sighted bearing up for the island; but of course neither of the men would hoist a signal on the Seventh Day, and they watched the craft run past the island; though they were amazed to see that she had only courses and a foresail set, in spite of the fact that the breeze was a light one. The next morning, when they were sitting at breakfast, discussing whether they should lay the foundation stone—with a commemorative lunch—of a Free Kirk, a Wee Free

Kirk, a U.P. meeting-house or an Ould Licht meeting-house—they had been fiercely debating on the merits of each during the previous twenty years—they saw the vessel returning with all sail on her. To run up one of their shirts to a pole at the entrance to the lagoon was a matter of a moment, and they saw that their signal was responded to. She was steered by their signals through the entrance to the lagoon and dropped anchor.

She turned out to be the *Bonnie Doon,* of Dundee, Douglas MacKellar, Master. He had found wreckage out at sea and had thought it possible that some survivors of the wreck might want passages "hame."

"Nae, nae," cried both men. "We're no in need o' passages hame just the noo. But what for did ye no mak' for the lagoon yestreen in the gloamin'?"

"Hoot awa'—hoot awa'! ye wouldna hae me come ashore on the Sawbath Day," said Captain MacKellar.

"Ye shortened sail though," said Mr. MacClackan.

"Ay; on Saturday nicht: I never let her do more than just sail on the Sawbath. But what for did ye no run up a signal, ye loons, if ye spied me sae weel?"

"Hoot awa'—hoot awa', man, ye wouldna hae a body mak' a signal on the Sawbath Day."

"Na—na; no a reg'lar signal; but ye micht hae run up a wee bittie—just eneuch tae catch me e'en on. Ay an' mebbe ye'll be steppin' aboard the noo?"

"We'll hae to hae a clash about it, Captain."

Well, they talked it over cautiously for a few hours; for Captain MacKellar was a hard man at a

bargain, and he would not agree to give them a passage under two pound a head. At last, however, negotiations were concluded, the men got aboard the *Bonnie Doon,* and piloted her through the channel. They reached the Clyde in safety, and Captain MacKellar remarked,—

" Weel, ma freens, I'm in hopes that ye'll pay me ower the siller this day."

" Ay, ye maun be in the quare swithers till ye see the siller; but we'll hand it ower, certes," said the passengers. " In the meantime, we'd tak' the leeberty o' callin' your attention to a wee bit contra-claim that we hae japped doon on a bit slip o' paper. It's three poon nine for Harbour Dues that ye owe us, Captain MacKellar, and twa poon ten for pilotage—it's compulsory at yon island, so 'tis, so mebbe ye'll mak' it convenient to hand us ower the differs when we land. Ay, Douglas MacKellar, ma mon, ye shouldna try to get the better o' Brither-Scots! "

Captain MacKellar was a God-fearing man, but he said, " Dom! "

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH

WHATEVER my garden may be, I think I can honestly claim for it that it has no educational value. The educational garden is one in which all the different orders and classes and groups and species and genera are displayed in such a way as to make no display, but to enable an ordinary person in the course of ten or twelve years to become a botanist. Botany is the syntax of the garden. A man may know everything about syntax and yet never become a poet; and a garden should be a poem.

I remember how a perfect poem of a garden was translated into the most repulsively correct prose by the exertions of a botanist. It was in a semi-public pleasure ground maintained by subscribers of a guinea each, and of course it was administered by a Committee. After many years of failure, an admirable head-gardener was found—a young and enthusiastic man with an eye for design and an appreciation of form as well as colour. Within a short space of time he turned a commonplace pleasure-ground into a thing of beauty; and, not content with making the enormous domed conservatory and the adjoining hothouse a blaze of colour and fragrance, he attacked an old worn-out greenhouse and, without asking for outside assistance,

transformed it into a natural sub-tropical landscape —palms and cacti and giant New Zealand ferns, growing amid rocky surroundings, and wonderful lilies filling a large natural basin, below an effective cascade. The place was just what such a place should be, conveying the best idea possible to have of a moist corner of a tropical forest, only without the overwhelming shabbiness which was the most striking note of every tropical forest I have ever seen in a natural condition. In addition to its attractiveness in this respect, it would have become a source of financial profit to the subscribers, for the annual "thinning out" of its superfluous growths would mean the stocking of many private conservatories.

On the Committee of Management, however, there was one gentleman whose aim in life was to be regarded by his fellow-tradesmen as a great botanist: he was, to a great botanist, what the writer of the cracker mottoes is to a great poet, or the compiler of the puzzle-page of a newspaper is to a great mathematician; but he was capable of making a fuss and convincing a bunch of tradesmen that making a fuss is a proof of superiority; and that botany and beauty are never to be found in association. He condemned the tropical garden as an abomination, because it was impossible that a place which could give hospitality to a growth of New Zealand fern (*Phormium Hookeri*), should harbour a sago palm (*Metroxylon Elatum*), which was not indigenous to New Zealand; and then he went on to talk about the obligations of the place to be educational and not ornamental, show-

ing quite plainly that to be botanical should be the highest aim of any one anxious for the welfare of his country.

The result of his harangue was the summoning of the head-gardener before the Board and his condemnation on the ground that he had put the Beautiful in the place that should be occupied by the Educational. He was ordered to abandon that unauthorised hobby of his for gratifying the senses of foolish people who did not know the difference between *Phormium Hookeri* and *Metroxylon Elatum,* and to set to work to lay out an Educational Garden.

He looked at the members of the Board, and, like the poker player who said, "I pass," when he heard who had dealt the cards, he made no attempt to defend himself. He laid out the Educational Garden that was required of him, and when he had done so and the Board thought that he was resigned to his fate as the interpreter of the rules of prosody as applied to a garden, he handed in his resignation, and informed them that he had accepted a situation as Curator of a park in a rival town, and at a salary—a Curator gets a salary and a gardener only wages—of exactly double the sum granted to him by the employers from whom he was separating himself.

In three years the place he left had become bankrupt and was wound up. It was bought at a "scrapping" figure by the Municipality, and its swings are now said to be the highest in five counties.

I saw the Educational Garden that he laid out, and I knew, and so did he, that he was "laying out"—the

undertaker's phrase—the whole concern. When he had completed it, I felt that I could easily resist the temptation to introduce education at the expense of design into any garden of mine.

It is undeniable that a place constructed on such a botanical system may be extremely interesting to a number of students, and especially so to druggists' apprentices; but turning to so-called "educational purposes" a piece of garden that can grow roses, is like using the silk of an embroiderer to darn the corduroys of a railway porter.

But it was a revelation to some people how the growing of war-time vegetables where only flowers had previously been grown, was not out of harmony with the design of a garden. I must confess that it was with some misgiving that I planted rows of runner beans in a long wall border which had formerly been given over to annuals, and globe artichokes where lilies did once inhabit—I even went so far as to sow carrots in lines between the echeverias of the stone-edged beds, and lettuces at the back of my fuchsia bushes. But the result from an æsthetic standpoint was so gratifying that I have not ceased to wonder why such beautiful things should be treated as were the fruit-trees, and looked on as steerage passengers are by the occupants of the fifty-guinea staterooms of a fashionable Cunarder. The artichoke is really a garden inmate; alongside the potatoes in the kitchen garden, it is like the noble Sir Pelleas who was scullery-maid in King Arthur's household. The globe artichoke is like one of those British peers whom

we hear of—usually when they have just died—as serving in the forecastle of a collier tramp. It is a lordly thing, and, I have found, it makes many of the most uppish forms in the flower garden hide diminished heads. An edging of dwarf cabbages of some varieties is quite as effective as one of box, and Dell's "black beet" cannot be beaten where a foliage effect is desired. Of course the runner bean must be accepted as a flower. If it has been excluded from its rightful quarters, it is because the idea is prevalent that it cannot be grown unless in the unsightly way that finds favour in the kitchen garden. It would seem as if the controllers of this department aimed at achieving the ugly in this particular. They make a sort of gipsy tripod of boughs, only without removing the twigs, and let the plant work its way up many of these. This is not good enough for a garden where neatness is regarded as a virtue.

I found that these beans can be grown with abundant success in a border, by running a stout wire along brackets, two or three feet out from a wall, and suspending the roughest manila twine at intervals to carnation wires in the soil below. This gives an unobtrusive support to the plants, and in a fortnight the whole of this flimsy frontage is hidden, and the blossoms are blazing splendidly. I have had rows of over a hundred feet of these beans, but not one support gave way even in the strongest wind, and the household was supplied up to the middle of November.

I am sure that such experiments add greatly to the interest of gardening; and I encourage my Olive

branch in her craving after a flower garden that shall be made up wholly of weeds. She has found out, I cannot say how, that the dandelion is a thing of beauty —she discovered one in a garden that she visited, and having never seen one before, inquired what was its name. I told her that the flower was not absolutely new to me, but lest I should lead her astray as to its name, she would do well to put her inquiry to the gardener and ask him for any hints he could give her as to its culture, and above all, how to propagate it freely. If he advised cuttings and a hot bed, perhaps he might be able to tell her the right temperature, and if he thought ordinary bonemeal would do for a fertiliser for it.

Beyond a doubt a bed of dandelions would look very fine, but one cannot have everything in a garden, and I hope I may have the chance, hitherto denied to me, of resigning myself to its absence from mine, even though it be only for a single week.

But there are many worthy weeds to be found when one looks carefully for them, and I should regard with great interest any display of them in a bed (in a neighbour's garden, providing that that garden was not within a mile of mine).

The transformation just mentioned of a decrepit greenhouse into the sub-tropical pleasure-ground, was not my inspiration for my treatment of a greenhouse which encumbered a part of my ground only a short time ago. It was a necessity for a practice of rigid economy that inspired me when I examined the dilapidations and estimated the cost of "making good" at

something little short of fifty pounds. It had been patched often enough before, goodness knows, and its wounds had been poulticed with putty until in some places it seemed to be suffering from an irrepressible attack of mumps.

Now the building had always been an offence to me. It was like an incompetent servant, who, in addition to being incapable of earning his wages, is possessed of an enormous appetite. With an old-fashioned heating apparatus the amount of fuel it consumed year by year was appalling; and withal it had more than once played us false, with the result that several precious lives were lost in a winter when we looked to the greenhouse to give us some colour for indoors. With such a list of convictions against it, I was not disposed to be lenient, and the suggestion of the discipline of a Reformatory was coldly received by me.

The fact was, that in my position as judge, I resembled too closely the one in Gilbert's *Trial by Jury* to allow of my being trusted implicitly in cases in which personal attractions are to be put in the scales of even-handed Justice; and with all its burden of guilt that greenhouse bore the reputation of unsightliness. If it had had a single redeeming feature, I might have been susceptible to its influence; but it had none. It had been born commonplace, and old age had not improved it.

Leaning against the uttermost boundary wall of the garden, it had been my achievement to hide it by the hedge of briar roses and the colonnade; but

it was sometimes only with great difficulty that we could head off visitors from its doors. Heywood heaped on it his concentrated opprobrium by calling it the Crystal Palace; but Dorothy, who had been a student of *Jane Eyre,* had given it the name of "Rochester's Wife," and we had behaved toward it pretty much as Jane's lover had behaved in his endeavour to set up a younger and more presentable object in the place of his mature demented partner: we had two other glass-houses that we could enter and see entered without misgiving; so that when we stood beside the offending one with the estimate of the cost of its reformation, I, at any rate, was not disposed to leniency.

"A case for the Reformatory," said Dorothy, and in a moment the word brought to my mind the advice of the young lord Hamlet, and I called out,—

"Reform it altogether."

"What do you mean?" she asked; for she sometimes gives me credit for uttering words with a meaning hidden somewhere among the meshes of verbiage.

"I have spoken the decision of the Court," I replied. "'Reform it altogether.'"

"At a cost—a waste—of sixty odd pounds?"

"I will not try to renew its youth like the eagles," said I, in the tone of voice of a prophet in the act of seeing a vision. "I shall make a new thing of it, and a thing of beauty into the bargain."

She laughed pretty much as in patriarchal days Sarai laughed at the forecast of an equally unlikely occurrence.

After an interval she laughed again, but with no note of derision.

"I see it all now—all!" she cried. "You will be the Martin Luther of its Reformation: you will cut the half of it away; but will the Church stand when you have done with it?"

"Stronger than it ever was. I will hear the voice of no protestant against it," I replied.

My scheme had become apparent to her in almost every particular as it had flashed upon me; and we began operations the very next day.

And this is what the operation amounted to—an Amputation.

When a limb has suffered such an injury as to make its recovery hopeless as well as a danger to the whole body, the saving grace of the surgeon's knife is resorted to, and the result is usually the rescue of the patient. Our resolution was to cut away the rotten parts of the roof of the greenhouse and convert the remainder, which was perfectly sound, into a peach-shelter; and within a couple of weeks the operation had been performed with what appeared to us to be complete success.

We removed the lower panes of glass without difficulty—the difficulty was to induce the others to remain under their bondage of ancient putty: "They don't make putty like that nowadays," remarked my builder, who is also, in accordance with the dictation of a job like this, a housebreaker, a carpenter, and a glazier—a sort of unity of many tools that comes to

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our relief (very appropriately) from the United States.

I replied to him enigmatically that putty was a very good servant, but a very bad master. The dictum had no connection with the matter in hand, but it sounded as if it had, and that it was the crystallisation of wisdom; and the good workman accepted it at its face value. He removed over two hundred panes, each four feet by ten inches, without breaking one, and he removed more than a thousand feet of the two-inch laths from the stages, the heavier ones being of oak; he braced up the seven foot depth of roof which we decreed should shelter our peaches, and " made good " the inequalities of the edges. In short, he made a thoroughly good job of the affair, and when he had finished he left us with a new and very interesting feature of the garden. A lean-to greenhouse is, as a rule, a commonplace incident in a garden landscape, and it is doubtful if it pays for its keep, though admittedly useful as a nursery; but a peach-alley is interesting because unusual. In our place of peace this element is emphasised through our having allowed the elevated, brick-built border that existed before, to remain untouched, and also the framework where the swing-glass ventilators had been hung. When our peach-trees were planted, flanked by plums and faced by apples *en espalier,* we covered the borders with violas of various colours, and enwreathed the framework with the Cape Plumbago and the Jasmine Solanum, and both responded nobly to our demands.

Nothing remained in order to place the transformation in harmony with its surroundings but to turn the two large brick tanks which had served us well in receiving the water from the old roof, into ornamental lily ponds, and this was accomplished by the aid of some of the stone carvings which I had picked up from time to time, in view of being able to give them a place of honour some day. On the whole, we are quite satisfied with this additional feature. It creates another surprise for the entertainment of a visitor, and when the peaches and plums ripen simultaneously, following the strawberries, we shall have, if we are to believe Friswell, many more friends coming to us.

"If they are truly friends, we shall be glad," says Dorothy.

"By your fruits ye shall know them," says he, for like most professors of the creed of the incredulous, he is never so much at his ease as when quoting Scripture.

This morning as I was playing (indifferently) the part of Preceptress Pinkerton, trying to induce on Rosamund, Olive, Francie, Marjorie, and our dear, wise John, a firm grasp of the elements of the nature of the English People as shown by their response to the many crusades in which they have taken part since the first was proclaimed by Peter the Hermit, I came to that part of my illuminating discourse which referred to the Nation's stolidity even in their hour of supreme triumph.

"This," said I, "may be regarded by the more

emotional peoples of Europe as showing a certain coldness of temperament, in itself suggesting a want of imagination, or perhaps, a cynical indifference—'cynical,' mind you, from *kyon*, a dog—to incidents that should quicken the beating of every human heart. But I should advise you to think of this trait of our great Nation as indicating a praiseworthy reserve of the deepest feelings. I regard with respect those good people who to-day are going about their business in the streets of our town just in the usual way, although the most important news that has reached the town since the news of the capture of Antioch in 1099, is expected this evening. And you will find that they will appear just as unconcerned if they learn that the terms of the Armistice have been accepted—they will stroll about with their hands in their pockets—not a cheer. . . . Is that your mother calling you, John?"

"No; I think it's somebody in the street?" said John.

"Oh, I forgot. It's Monday—market day. There's more excitement in Yardley High Street if a cow turns into Waterport Lane than there will be when Peace is proclaimed. But still, I repeat, that this difference . . . What was that? two cows must have turned into—— Why, what's this—what's—sit down, all of you—I tell you it's only——"

"Hurrah—hurrah—hurrah—hurrah—hurrah!" comes from the five young throats of five rosy-cheeked, unchecked children, responding to the five hundred that roar through the streets.

In five minutes the front of our house is ablaze with flags, and five Union Jacks are added to the hundreds that young and old wave over their heads in the street; and amid the tumult the recent admirer of the stolid English People is risking his neck in an endeavour to fix a Crusader's well-worn helmet in an alcove above the carven lions on the porch of his home.

There, high over us, stands the Castle Keep as it stood in the days of the First Crusade.

"And ever above the topmost roof the banner of England blew."

. . . . . .

Going out I saw a cow stray down Waterport Lane; but no one paid any attention to its errantry.

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